

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Pacemaker vs. Defibrillator
- High Potassium Diet
- Italian Zucchini
- Sea Salt

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What is the Difference between a Pacemaker and a Defibrillator?

What is the difference between a pacemaker and a defibrillator? This is a very commonly asked question and very commonly misunderstood concept. All defibrillators that are implanted inside the heart (intracardiac) are pacemakers. All pacemakers are not defibrillators. A pacemaker is a device shown in the picture here that sends electrical impulses to the heart to make the heart beat. Pacemakers have wires or leads that go through a vein in the chest down into the chambers of the heart. A pacemaker may have anywhere from one to three wires. The pacemaker is set at a certain rate (ie 60 beats per minute) and it will not allow the heart rate to drop below the set rate. In most cases, pacemakers are placed in individuals who have slower heart rates that are causing symptoms.



The symptoms of slow heart rate can include fatigue, dizziness, shortness of breath, passing out, lightheadedness, and chest pain. Most individuals require between one and two wires, however, three wires can be placed. The wires can be in the top right chamber of the heart (right atrium) and the bottom chambers (right and left ventricles). Sometimes, the heart may not be too slow but it may not be conducting the heart beat properly. This may also be a reason to have a pacemaker

placed. Pacemakers do not prevent the heart from going too fast and abnormal heart rhythms can still occur. A defibrillator is a device similar to the pacemaker but larger. As previously stated, it can pace the heart and will prevent the heart from going too slow as well. However that is usually not the main reason defibrillators are placed. Defibrillators have anywhere from one to three wires (leads) that also go down in the heart chambers. The wire that goes into the right ventricle also has the capability of shocking the heart. The purpose of this is to prevent sudden cardiac death from a life threatening abnormal heart rhythm such as ventricular tachycardia or ventricular fibrillation. Defibrillators do not prevent an abnormal rhythm from occurring but can treat it with pacing or shocking if it is thought to be a life threatening rhythm. Generally speaking defibrillators have a shorter battery life than pacemakers do, although battery life is variable. (4).

Tip of the Month

How to get more Potassium in your Diet:

1. Make sure you are not on a potassium restricted diet before eating high potassium foods. Check with your healthcare provider.
2. Eat more fruit (bananas, oranges, prunes, figs, avocados, kiwi, cantaloupe, apricot, dried fruits).
3. Eat more vegetables (sweet potatoes, greens, okra, raw carrots, tomatoes, pumpkin, yams, peas, and refried beans).
4. Add some dairy products (low fat yogurt or milk).
5. Eat some nuts or peanut butter (get unsalted nuts and the all natural peanut butter is very low in sodium).
6. Increase your intake of bran or granola. (2,3).





Recipe obtained and modified from Italian corn and zucchini recipe by Free Weight Loss Recipes.com

Italian Zucchini Medley

Ingredients:

1 Tb Olive Oil
 1 Sweet Onion
 1 Chopped Red Bell Pepper
 2 Ears Fresh Corn
 2 Small Zucchini
 1\4 cup chopped fresh Parsley
 4 Tb grated Parmesan Cheese
 1 Tsp chopped Garlic
 1\4 cup Black Pepper

Directions:

1. Shave corn off cob and chop vegetables.
2. Heat olive oil over medium heat in skillet.
3. Add onion and bell pepper, cook for 3 minutes.
4. Add zucchini and corn and cook for 5 minutes or until all vegetables are tender.
5. Remove from heat and add pepper and 2 Tb parmesan cheese. Top with remaining cheese.
6. Enjoy!

Health Information

Serving size: 2\3 cup
 Servings: 6
 Calories: 90
 Total Fat: 4.5 g
 Sat Fat 1.5 g
 Sodium 90 mg
 Cholesterol 5 mg
 Carbs 10 g
 Protein 4 g
 Sugars 4 g
 Fiber 2 g

Quote of the Month: “There are only two days in the year that nothing can be done. One is called yesterday and the other is called tomorrow, so today is the right day to love, believe, do and mostly live” Dalai Lama

Bible Verse of the Month:

“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever” Hebrews 13:8.

Did you Know?



Did you know that Sea Salt has just as much sodium as regular table salt. There may be a few exceptions, but on average both have about 575 mg per one fourth of a teaspoon. So no, sea salt is not a lower sodium version of salt. From a sodium content standpoint it is not any better for you.

So what is the difference then? Sea salt is made from the evaporation of seawater. It undergoes no or minimal processing and therefore may contain small amounts of minerals such as calcium, potassium, magnesium and other nutrients. Table salt however, is mined from salt deposits and then processed. It is usually stripped of any minerals and may have additives to prevent clumping. Table salt contains more iodine which has been added to help prevent the iodine deficiency.

Many individuals are not aware of this. In a survey conducted in 2011 by the American Heart Association, sixty one percent of individuals surveyed thought that sea salt had less sodium than table salt. The sea salt industry has definitely done a great job with marketing. It is chosen in many cases because of its “all natural” properties and has gained popularity among chefs and manufacturers alike. If you like it for its texture or taste more than table salt, that is fine. But do not feel like you are doing something “healthier” by choosing sea salt over table salt.

Remember, no matter which one you decide to use, the milligrams can add up quick. One fourth of a teaspoon is not a lot. For many heart patients, the sodium recommendation is under 2000 mg in a day. (1).

There are several reasons a defibrillator may be needed. The first reason would be a cardiac arrest that was caused by a ventricular arrhythmia. The next reason would be in someone that had a sustained ventricular arrhythmia that was documented but did not cause a cardiac arrest. These two sets of individuals have already shown to have a significant risk of death from a cardiac arrest and the defibrillator would decrease the likelihood of dying from the abnormal heart rhythm. The next group of individuals who may benefit from one is people who are high risk for ventricular arrhythmias and cardiac arrest. This includes people with heart failure if their ejection fraction is less than 35 percent, especially if there is a prior history of heart attack. If someone has had a stent placed or coronary artery bypass surgery, there is usually a three month waiting period to see if the heart function is going to improve. If it does not, then a defibrillator may be recommended. Other conditions may include Prolonged QT syndrome, Brugada syndrome, and hypertrophic cardiomyopathy. If an individual is recurrently passing out and has other high risk cardiac features or an abnormal electrophysiology study, a defibrillator may be considered. This is not an extensive list of indications but some common ones.

In summary, pacemakers and defibrillators are similar in some ways but overall different devices that are used for different reasons. Both are used to help electrical problems in the heart. Both are easily placed into the heart. Devices have come a long way over the last few decades and the technology is only growing. Devices are becoming smarter, smaller, and lasting longer. Newer devices are on the horizon that may not even have wires so stay tuned. (4).

Have an Awesome August

Where did the summer go? I do not know but school is back in session and my family has a schedule once again. Life is good. It is amazing how smoother life sometimes goes when we have a schedule, a regimen, a knowledge of what to expect. The children function so much better with a schedule. Sure they get tired but there is no question how the day is going to go from Monday thru Friday. I think adults are similar in this way as well. I don't know about you but I am more productive when I have limited time do something versus an entire day with nothing to do. Many of you may be retired but you can still have a loose schedule. The reason this is important because it helps you stay on track with taking your medications, using your brain, and staying active. I encourage you everyday to get up, eat breakfast, take your medications, go for a walk, go visit someone. Having a hobby also helps. There is a reason we had our kids on a schedule. It works.



I hope this newsletter was informative and helpful. Don't forget to join us on Facebook and Pinterest.

Thank you for letting us "keep you in rhythm".

Sincerely,

Kacy Jones and the HeartHelp team

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