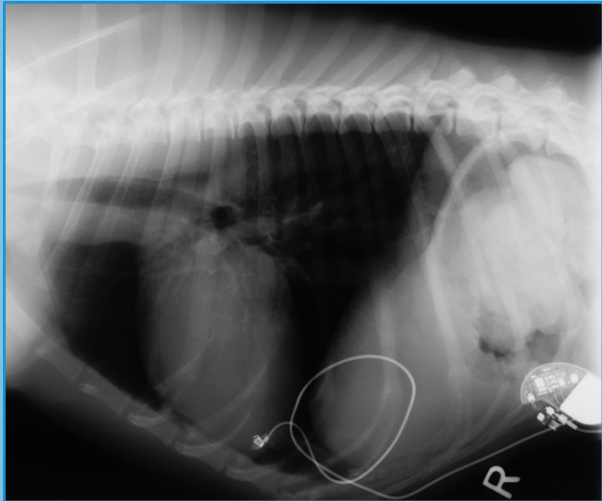




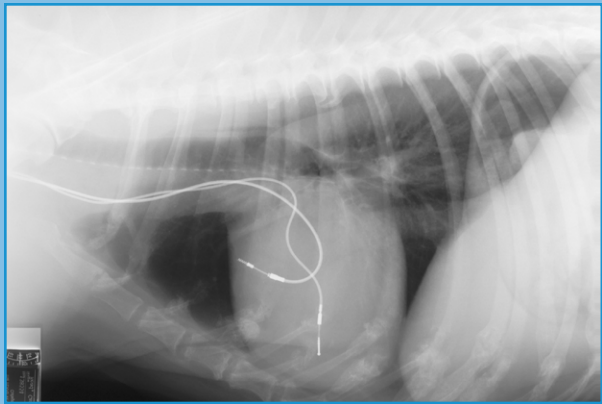
This device is used to determine the pacemaker settings, which is called interrogation. Pacemaker interrogation and reprogramming is recommended on a routine basis.



Pacemaker placed in the abdomen.



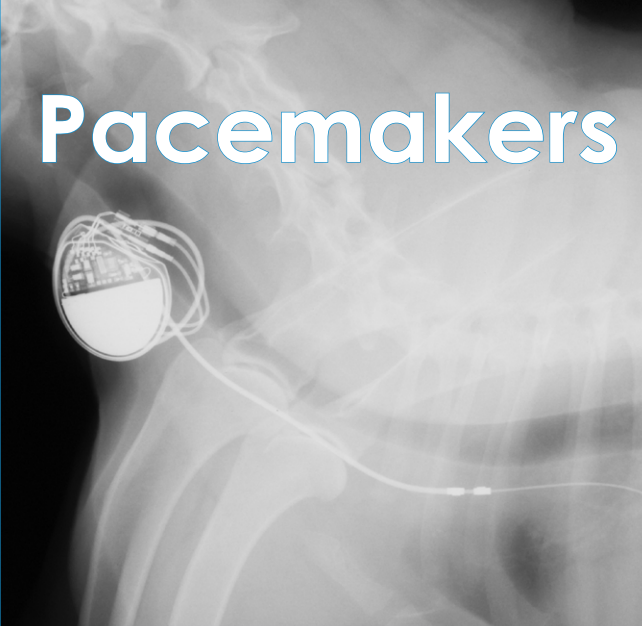
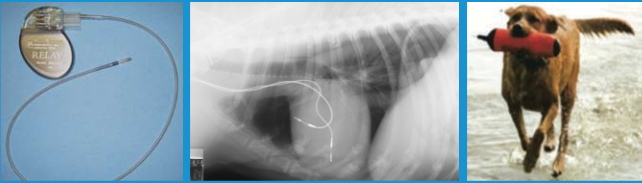
A pacemaker is made up of two components: a battery and a lead.



Dual-chamber pacemaker with multiple leads.



To find out about Bryce's story, visit: [cvm.tamu.edu/vscs/cardiology/testimonials](http://cvm.tamu.edu/vscs/cardiology/testimonials)



# Pacemakers



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## Why does my dog need a PACEMAKER?

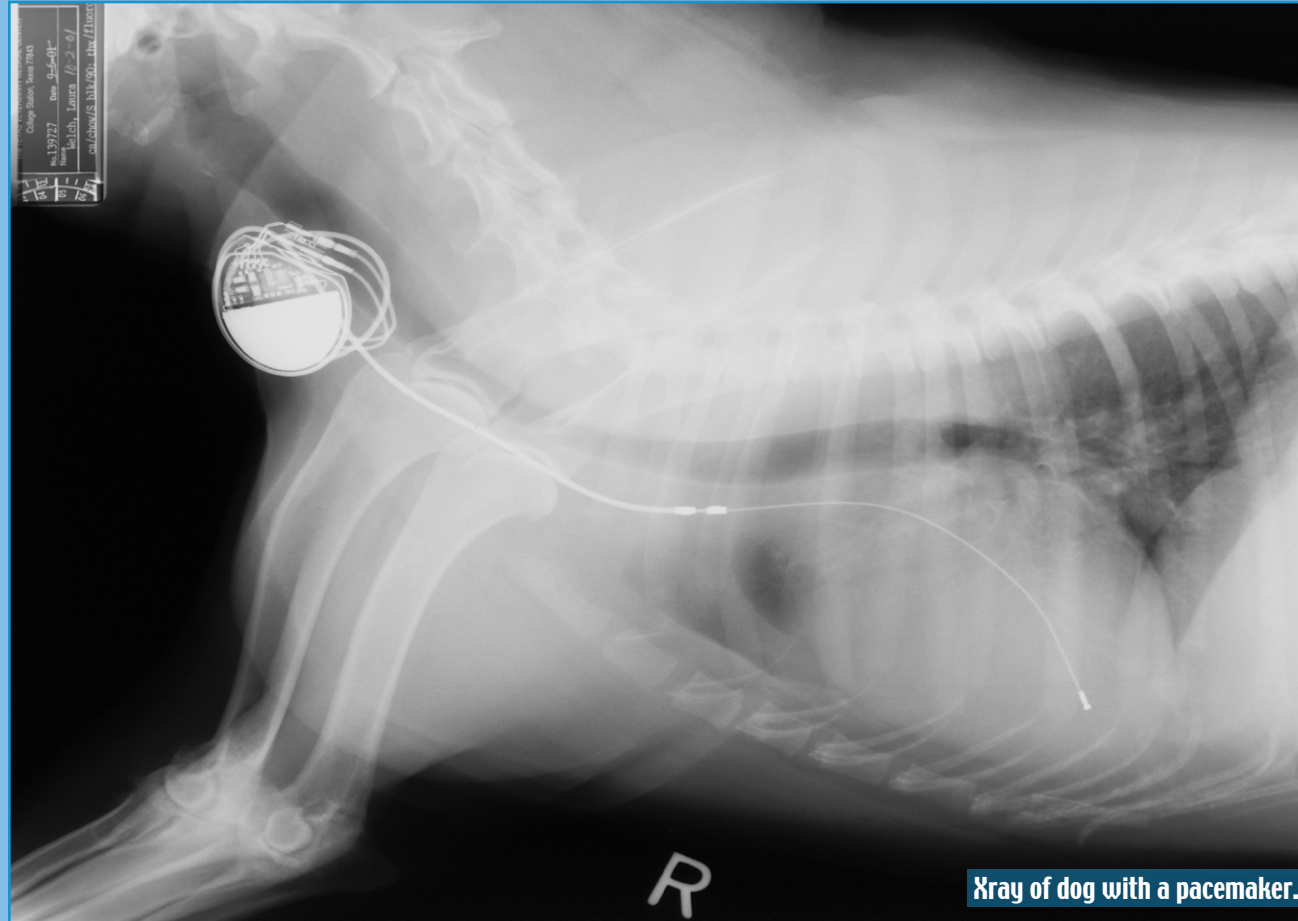
Most dogs that require a pacemaker have **slow heart rates** and clinical signs of **exercise intolerance, collapse or fainting and heart failure**.

## What happens if my dog has a slow heart rate, but we decide not to put in a pacemaker?

Clinical signs of exercise intolerance, collapse and heart failure may persist or worsen without pacemaker implantation. Occasionally, the heart will stop beating resulting in sudden death.

## How is a pacemaker placed?

The pacemaker is typically placed through the jugular vein in the right side of the neck. Occasionally, the pacemaker may be placed in the abdomen if your dog has skin disease or any other disease that prevents placement in the neck. The decision on where to place the pacemaker will be decided by the doctor caring for your dog. Some dogs need one pacing lead, while others will require multiple pacing leads depending on the heart problem.



Xray of dog with a pacemaker.

## Is my dog too old for a pacemaker?

Many dogs that require a pacemaker are older. Often times, owners may attribute slowing down to aging when, in fact, it is due to a slow heart rate. Important diseases of other organ systems, however, may preclude placement of a pacemaker.

## How often are recheck examinations recommended?

Rechecks to evaluate pacemaker function and battery life should be performed **one month** following pacemaker placement and then every **six months**, ideally at Texas A&M. Additional rechecks are recommended earlier if your dog exhibits weakness or collapses.

## Will my dog need heart medication?

Most dogs will not require medication following pacemaker placement. However, concurrent or underlying disease may necessitate additional medical therapy.

## What is needed once my dog is home from surgery?

It is important that the incision be kept clean and dry. Activity should be kept to a minimum for **30 days** until the incision has completely healed, and to minimize the chance of pacemaker lead dislodgement. A special diet is not required unless recommended by the doctor caring for your dog. If your dog's pacemaker was placed in the neck, a harness should be used instead of a collar to walk your dog to prevent unnecessary pulling on the pacemaker.

## What things should dogs with pacemakers avoid?

Microwaves do not present a danger to your dog. If your dog has a pacemaker and requires a Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) or Computed Tomography (CT) scan, notify your veterinarian.