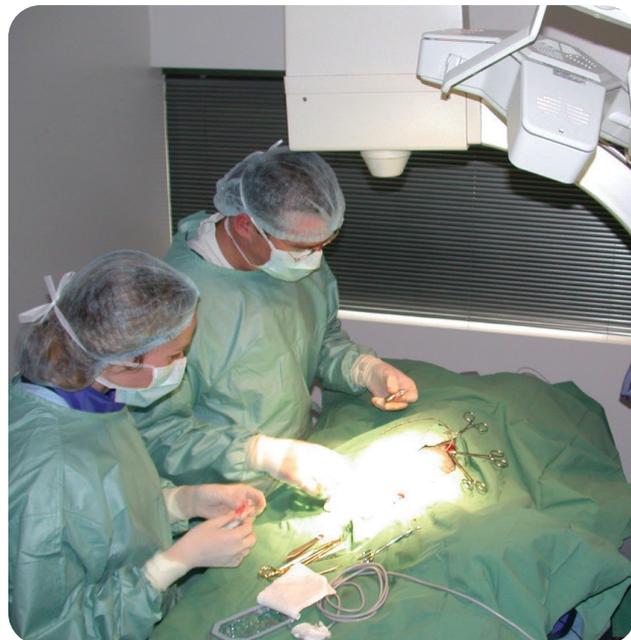


# Pacemaker Implantation

When your pet is diagnosed with an abnormal heart rhythm, such as a dangerously slow heartbeat (bradycardia), it can be unsettling. You may notice your pet becoming weak, fainting during activity, or struggling with exercise intolerance. At Sawgrass Veterinary Cardiology, we understand how worrying this can be. Our role is to walk with you through the diagnosis and provide advanced treatment options that restore your pet's quality of life.



One of the most effective treatments for severe rhythm disturbances is pacemaker implantation. A pacemaker is a small device that helps the heart maintain a regular rate and rhythm. In pets, as in people, a pacemaker can be life-saving, allowing them to return to normal activity and enjoy the time they have with their families.

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## How is a pacemaker implanted?

The procedure is performed under general anesthesia by our team of board-certified veterinary cardiologists. Using advanced imaging, a small incision is made near the neck or shoulder region. Through a vein, we guide a pacing lead into the heart, where it is positioned to deliver gentle electrical impulses that stimulate each heartbeat. The pacemaker generator (the small device that powers the impulses) is placed under the skin and connected to the lead.

This minimally invasive approach avoids open-chest surgery and is very well tolerated. The procedure typically requires a short hospital stay, and many pets can return home the following day.

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## What happens after surgery?

Your pet will need a short period of rest at home while the incision heals and while the heart adjusts to the pacemaker. We will provide detailed instructions on activity restriction, incision care, and any short-term medications. Over the following weeks, most pets regain their energy, stop fainting, and return to enjoying walks, playtime, and family life.

Pacemakers require lifelong follow-up, but not lifelong hospitalization. Periodic rechecks are scheduled to ensure the device is functioning properly, the battery is strong, and the lead remains in place. Pacemaker batteries generally last several years, and when replacement is needed, the process is much simpler than the initial implantation.

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## Are there any risks?

Every procedure involving anesthesia carries some risk, and with pacemakers there can also be rare complications such as lead displacement, infection at the incision site, or device malfunction. These are uncommon, and our team takes every precaution to minimize risks. We will review these in detail with you before the procedure so you know what to expect.

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## Will my pet still need medications?

Some pets may require cardiac medications in addition to their pacemaker, depending on other underlying conditions. However, in many cases the pacemaker alone is enough to control the rhythm problem, and medications may not be necessary.