

Pacemakers will become increasingly common here as the population ages

The pacemaker, which contains a tiny computer chip and a power generator, is placed under the skin of the chest or in the abdomen.

ELECTRODES inserted into vein leading to heart

RIGHT ATRIUM

RIGHT VENTRICLE

The pacemaker sends electrical signals to the heart to help it beat at a proper rate. It reacts when a person exercises and needs the heart to pump faster.

■ A basic pacemaker has a single wire connected to the heart, which will prevent the heart from stopping. A more sophisticated two- or three-wire unit tracks the upper and lower chambers of the heart.

■ People with pacemakers need to keep them away from mobile phones, microwave ovens and airport electronic screening as these could interfere with their effectiveness.

	Pacemakers per million people
United States	752
France	738
Sweden	633
Australia	590
Britain	447
Israel	333
Japan	243
Hong Kong	157
Taiwan	119
Singapore	91

Source: The world survey of cardiac pacing and cardioverter-defibrillators 2005