

Pacemakers and Welding

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Pacemakers are small electrical devices that are surgically implanted in cardiac patients to help the heart beat regularly. Since the pacemaker is an electrical device, strong electromagnetic interference (EMI) can affect their ability to function properly.

Certain types of welding and cutting produce strong electromagnetic fields. Therefore, individuals with pacemakers should not go near welding and cutting operations until the manufacturer of the device and their doctor have properly cleared them for such exposure.

ANSI Z49.1: 2005 Safety in Welding, Cutting, and Allied Processes includes the following language regarding pacemakers.

11.4.9.9 Wearers of Pacemakers. Wearers of pacemakers or other electronic equipment vital to life shall check with the life support manufacturers and their clinician to determine whether a hazard exists.

E 11.4.9.9 Welders and other persons who must work in a welding environment should inform their doctors prior to undergoing device installation procedures.