



HEALTH INFORMATION

Cardiac Arrhythmia

What is Cardiac Arrhythmias?

An arrhythmia is a problem with the rate or rhythm of the heartbeat. During an arrhythmia, the heart can beat too fast, too slow, or with an irregular rhythm.

Most arrhythmias are harmless, but some can be serious or even life threatening. During an arrhythmia, the heart may not be able to pump enough blood to the body.

Causes, incidence and risk factors

Normally, your heart works as a pump that brings blood to the lungs and the rest of the body. To help this happen, your heart has an electrical system that makes sure it contracts in an orderly way. Arrhythmias are caused by problems with the heart's electrical conduction system.

Some common causes of abnormal heartbeats are:

- Abnormal levels of potassium or other substances
- Heart attack, or a damaged heart muscle from a past heart attack
- Heart disease that is present at birth (congenital)
- Heart failure or an enlarged heart
- Overactive thyroid gland

Arrhythmias may also be caused by some substances or drugs.

Symptoms

When you have an arrhythmia, your heartbeat may be:

- Too quick
- Irregular, uneven, or skipping beats

An arrhythmia may be present all of the time or it may come and go. You may or may not feel symptoms when the arrhythmia is present, or you may only notice symptoms when you are more active.

www.medigold-health.com

Provided by Medigold Health Consultancy Ltd. All content is provided for general information only, and should not be treated as a substitute for the medical advice of your own GP or any other health care professional. No responsibility or liability for any diagnosis made by the reader based on the content of this information sheet is taken. This information does not endorse any commercial product or service mentioned. Always consult your own GP if you're in any way concerned about your health.



Symptoms can be very mild, or they may be severe or even life-threatening.

Common symptoms that may occur when the arrhythmia is present include:

- Chest pain
- Fainting
- Light-headedness, dizziness
- Paleness
- Shortness of breath
- Sweating

Treatment?

When an arrhythmia is serious, you may need urgent treatment to restore a normal rhythm. This may include:

- Electrical "shock" therapy (defibrillation or cardioversion)
- Implanting a short-term heart pacemaker
- Medications given through a vein or by mouth

Sometimes, getting better treatment for your angina or heart failure will decrease the chance of having an arrhythmia.

Medications called anti-arrhythmic drugs may be used.

Prognosis

The outcome depends on several factors:

- The kind of arrhythmia - some arrhythmias may be life threatening if not treated right away, or do not respond well to treatment
- Whether you have coronary artery disease, heart failure, or valvular heart disease.



MEDIGOLD
HEALTH

05/2018