



Preparing for your appointment

Step 1: Record Your Information

Write down any signs and symptoms you've had, and for how long. Some warning signs and symptoms may include fainting or "blacking out," seizures, palpitations (an uncomfortable awareness of your heartbeat), or consistent or unusual chest pain and/or shortness of breath during exercise.

Write down your key medical information, including any other health problems and the names of all of your medications. It will also be important to share any family history of heart disease or sudden death with your doctor.

Write down any questions that you have for your doctor.

Tip: it can be hard to remember what the doctor says at appointments - they can be long, overwhelming, or full of words you're not familiar with. We recommend finding a family member or friend who can come with you to the appointment, if possible. You can also use a recording application like Medcorder or Abridge.

Step 2: Question you can ask at your initial appointment

- ☐ What could be causing my signs and symptoms?
- ☐ Are there any other possible causes for these signs and symptoms?
- ☐ What tests are needed?
- ☐ Should I see a heart specialist?

Step 3: Questions to ask a specialist (electrophysiologist)

- ☐ Do I have an inherited arrhythmia condition? What is it called?
- ☐ What is my risk, and why?
- ☐ What treatment approach do you recommend?
- ☐ If you're recommending medications, what are the possible side effects?
- ☐ If you're recommending surgery, what type of procedure is most likely to be effective in my case? Why?
- ☐ What should I expect from my recovery and rehabilitation after surgery?
- ☐ Will I need frequent exams and lifelong treatment for this condition?
- ☐ What medicines should I avoid, if any?
- ☐ Should I meet with a genetic counselor?
- ☐ If the first treatment you recommend doesn't work, what will you recommend next?
- ☐ What emergency signs and symptoms should I be aware of?
- ☐ Should I tell my friends, teachers and co-workers that I have this condition?
- ☐ What activity restrictions will I need to follow, if any?
- ☐ What is my long-term outlook with treatment?
- ☐ What is the risk that my future children would have this condition?

In addition to the questions you've prepared, don't hesitate to ask anything during your appointment if you don't understand something.

Step 4: What your doctor might ask you or your child

A doctor or specialist seeing you or your child for a possible condition may ask a number of questions, including:

- ☐ What are your symptoms?
- ☐ When did you first begin experiencing symptoms?
- ☐ Have your symptoms gotten worse over time?
- ☐ Do strong emotions trigger your symptoms, such as excitement, anger or surprise?
- ☐ Does exercise bring on your symptoms?
- ☐ Does being startled – such as by a doorbell or phone ringing – trigger your symptoms?
- ☐ Do your symptoms include feeling lightheaded or dizzy?
- ☐ Have you ever fainted?
- ☐ Have you ever had a seizure?
- ☐ Do your symptoms include a fluttering sensation in your chest?
- ☐ Do you gasp in your sleep in a way that you're aware of?
- ☐ Have you been diagnosed with any other medical conditions?

- ☐ Are you aware of any history of heart problems in your family?
- ☐ Have any first-degree relatives – parent, sibling or child – ever died unexpectedly, such as from drowning, or died suddenly without explanation?
- ☐ What medications are you currently taking, including over-the-counter and prescription drugs as well as vitamins and supplements?
- ☐ Have you ever used recreational drugs? If so, which ones?
- ☐ What is your typical daily diet?
- ☐ Do you use caffeine? How much?
- ☐ Do you have any children? Are you planning any future pregnancies?