

These are a feeling that your heart is beating too hard or too fast, skipping a beat, or fluttering. You may notice heart palpitations in your chest, throat, or neck.

Heart palpitations can be bothersome or frightening. They usually aren't serious or harmful, though, and often go away on their own. Most of the time, they're related to stress and anxiety or to consumption of stimulants such as caffeine, nicotine, or alcohol. Palpitations also often occur during pregnancy.

Mine occurred after an operation cutting out the twisted parts of my small and large intestines and joining them. The twists stopped all movement, causing complete constipation for three days. The operation caused my heart beat to increase to 150. 180 is curtains. I felt the bed vibrating and complained about it. The first nurse thought I was delirious, the second one the next day realised it was my heart causing it. A 50 joule shock in a ten minute operation brought it down to 90.

Lying on my back with four tubes entering my arms and one emptying me, meant that I had to lie still on my back for four days. No teeth washing, no eating and no exercise was horrible. My blood pressure went way up, and didn't decrease until I got home after eight days, and sat at the desk in front of my computer, and did the knee lifting exercise I developed, and is the only one I know that does no damage or wearing out of the body. Read Exercise.

## Symptoms of a stroke coming on from friend Bob Currie

Pins and needles in fingers and/or lips, eyelid twitching, cheek collapsing so you bite it, speech sounding drunk or even illegible, arm or leg won't do what your brain tells it to do, leg collapsing.

## What to Expect in the Emergency Room

If you or someone you love requires emergency heart treatment, it will help to know when to get to the emergency room and what to expect. It's also important to know how to be prepared in the event of a heart attack.

In rare cases, palpitations can be a sign of a more serious heart condition. Therefore, if you have heart palpitations, make arrangements to see your doctor. And seek immediate medical attention if along with palpitations, you experience shortness of breath, dizziness, chest pain, or fainting.

After taking your medical history and conducting a physical exam, your doctor may order tests that can either confirm or rule out an underlying cause. If an underlying cause is found, the right treatment can reduce or eliminate palpitations. If your palpitations are not related to an underlying cause, lifestyle changes, including stress management and the avoidance of common triggers, can help prevent them.

## Causes of Heart Palpitations

Many things can cause heart palpitations. In the vast majority of cases, the cause is either related to your heart or is unknown. Non-heart-related causes of palpitations include:

- Strong emotions such as anxiety, fear, or stress; palpitations often occur during panic attacks.
- Vigorous physical activity
- Caffeine, nicotine, alcohol, or illegal street drugs such as cocaine and amphetamines
- Medical conditions, including thyroid disease, a low blood sugar level, anaemia, low blood pressure, fever, and dehydration
- Hormonal changes during menstruation, pregnancy, or the perimenopausal period; sometimes, palpitations during pregnancy are signs of anaemia.
- Medications, including diet pills, decongestants, asthma inhalers, and some drugs used to prevent arrhythmias (a serious heart rhythm problem) or treat an under-active thyroid
- Certain herbal and nutritional supplements
- Abnormal electrolyte levels

Some people experience palpitations after eating heavy meals that are rich in carbohydrates, sugar, or fat. Sometimes, eating foods with high levels of monosodium glutamate (MSG), nitrates, or sodium can bring them on.

If you have heart palpitations after eating certain foods, the problem could be food sensitivity. Keeping a food diary can help you identify which foods to avoid.

Palpitations can also be related to underlying heart disease. When they are, palpitations are more likely to represent arrhythmia. Heart conditions associated with palpitations include:

Heart palpitations are most often not serious. They can be due to -

- Anxiety, stress, panic attacks, or fear
- Diet pills
- Exercise
- Fever
- A severe long surgical operation.

However, some palpitations are due to an abnormal heart rhythm, which may be caused by-

- Heart disease
- Abnormal heart valve, such as mitral valve prolapse
- Abnormal blood levels of potassium
- Certain medications, including those used to treat asthma, high blood pressure, or heart.
- Overactive thyroid
- Low levels of oxygen in your blood
- Learn to reduce stress and anxiety. This can help prevent palpitations and help you better manage them when they occur.

• Try breathing exercises or deep relaxation (a step-by-step process of tensing and then relaxing every muscle group in your body)

- Get regular exercise.

The following symptoms require immediate attention. Call 911 or your local emergency number:

- Lose of alertness (consciousness)
- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Unusual sweating,
- Dizziness lightheadedness
- You feel frequent extra heartbeats (more than 6 per minute or coming in groups of 3 or more).

When do the palpitations occur? In response to reminders of a traumatic event?