



PATIENT INFORMATION SHEET

Long Term Cardiac Rhythm (Event) Monitoring

This is a way of recording the heart's rhythm over a long period of time such as 1 to 2 months and up to 6 months rather than 24 to 48 hours as is done with Holter recorders. This is a much simpler and less sophisticated recorder than a 24-hour ECG recorder but allows us to measure the heart's rhythm during very infrequent or asymptomatic events. An alternative is to implant a loop recorder but this is an invasive procedure and designed for much longer recording periods of 3 or more years. The device is battery operated and sends recorded information via a standard telephone line to a website where the information is uploaded and transmitted to our practice.

Why is it done?

- **Diagnosis of Fits, Faints and 'Funny Turns'**. Changes in heart function - either heart rhythm or blood pressure - can cause symptoms that lead to dizziness or loss of consciousness, which can cause falls and injuries and resemble non-heart related problems like balance disorders or epilepsy. Both fast and slow heart rhythms can disturb consciousness. Recording the heart rhythm from the ECG is valuable in making the diagnosis or excluding a heart related cause.
- **Diagnosis of the cause of palpitations**. Palpitations may be due to increased awareness of the normal beat of the heart, a sense of an irregular beat or fast heart beat due to a change in the heart's rhythm (arrhythmia). Many disturbances of the heart's rhythm are relatively harmless but others are not and detecting the type of heart arrhythmia is very important.
- **Monitoring for asymptomatic but infrequent arrhythmias**. The test may be performed to look for arrhythmias like atrial fibrillation (AF), or complex ventricular arrhythmias such as ventricular tachycardia (VT). This includes before and after treatments such as drug treatment of AF, to confirm the effectiveness of procedures such as ablation of arrhythmias like atrial fibrillation (AF), atrial flutter or supraventricular tachycardia (SVT) and, less frequently, ventricular tachycardia.

How is it done?

The devices may be single or multi user devices. The device we use (heartEVENT) is a single use device which is small, lightweight and easy to use. The battery lasts for up to 2,500 recordings.

What clothing and other preparations do I need?

The recording device is attached to the skin by a pair of electrodes and is worn for as long as possible night and day. If you feel symptoms such as palpitations, dizziness or light headedness you can press a button on the device to store a record of the heart rhythm at the time (ECG) for up to 40 seconds before and after the 'event'. The device will also automatically record any ECG rhythm abnormality for up to 2 events.

The recorder can store up to 4 events, 2 self-initiated and 2 automatic ones before it needs to be connected to the telephone line and the stored information is downloaded to the website and the memory reset. The device flashes to tell the user that a recording has been done or if the memory is full. Occasionally, you can get a skin rash where the electrodes are attached and in that case a change in electrode might solve the problem.

Ian Wilcox
PhD FRACP

Richmond Jeremy
PhD FRACP

Jo-Dee Lattimore
PhD FRACP

Michele McGrady
PhD FRACP

Graham Hillis
PhD FRACP

Mark Adams
PhD FRACP

Sanjay Patel
PhD FRACP

Jens Kilian
PhD FRACP

Anushka Patel
PhD FRACP

Kim Chan
MB BS FRACP