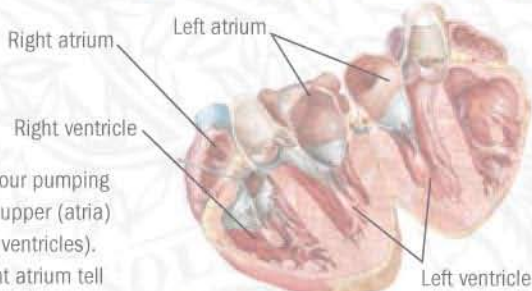


MANAGING YOUR PREMATURE VENTRICULAR CONTRACTIONS

Premature ventricular contractions (PVCs) are extra, abnormal heartbeats in the ventricles that occur too early. PVCs are very common and can happen in healthy people.



Healthy people with no symptoms need no treatment. Limiting or avoiding caffeine, alcohol, nicotine, and stress can make PVCs occur less often. Medicines can control PVCs if symptoms become severe.



The heart has four pumping chambers, two upper (atria) and two lower (ventricles). Cells in the right atrium tell the ventricles to contract.

Exercise can help people who are inactive. An exercise stress test can be used to make sure that you can exercise safely.



The most common causes are caffeine, nicotine, alcohol, and stress. Other causes are heart disease, high blood pressure, congestive heart failure, medicines, and illegal drugs.

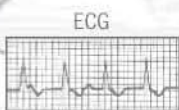


Reduce exposure to PVC triggers, such as caffeine, alcohol, nicotine, drugs, and stress.



Most people don't have symptoms. Some have a feeling of the heart missing a beat followed by a stronger beat. Other symptoms are heart fluttering, palpitations, a sensation of heart pounding, and jumping.

Try stress reduction methods, such as biofeedback, meditation, or yoga.



Holter monitor



Call your doctor if you have palpitations, chest pain, shortness of breath, or fainting.

Your doctor may find an irregular pulse during a physical examination. ECG, Holter monitoring, exercise stress testing, echocardiography, and an electrophysiology study may also be done.