

James' story

As a fit and active 40 year old I never anticipated having an arrhythmia (Atrial Fibrillation). In November 2009 whilst exercising at my gym my heart went in AV Sinus node arrhythmia (I think that's the medical description). The experience was un-nerving and pretty frightening. The following day I went straight to my GP who, after an ECG, detected the presence of an arrhythmia and I was admitted to hospital immediately. Fortunately as I had reported the symptoms early I was able to be treated immediately with an anti-arrhythmic drug. The drug worked and I did not require being "shocked" back into rhythm. Follow up appointments with a cardiologist determined that I had a healthy heart (an echo was performed to evaluate this, followed by a Bruce test). The quick actions of my GP were a major factor enabling me to receive the appropriate treatment in a timely manner, and for this I am eternally grateful.

I have been given a positive bill of heart health - the incident is being treated as an isolated occurrence; although I have been diagnosed with having Bradycardia, (perhaps more to do with my previously reasonable levels of fitness) - the psychological impact is still with me today. Every time my heart "flutters" I am conscious that it may be the start of another arrhythmia. This has impacted up my approach to exercise; I exercise less intensely only two or three times a week. I'd like to do more but have to admit to being a little perturbed about "over-doing it". I would personally take comfort in having a follow up ECG and associated tests on a more regular basis to allay my concerns of an arrhythmia happening again.