

Georgia's Story

I'm 34 and I've had SVT for 15 years. I was diagnosed on Christmas Eve in 2010. From the age of around 19 I can remember going out with my friends having drinks etc and at some point in the evening being holed up in the toilets of a club or garden of a pub having really bad palpitations. I remember the first time was after I had a cigarette and I just put it down to me being a new smoker. Every time I had palpitations I was alone and if I wasn't I would go off somewhere and try and sit it out. When I mentioned my palpitations to friends they would say, "oh I get that sometimes when I've had a coffee"... "or before my period" - so I assumed it was common and normal... and I would be making a big deal if I told anyone mine were really frightening and lasted for up to 2 hours sometimes.

In the years that followed I suffered from the attacks sporadically. Sometimes I'd go for 6 months without a single palpitation. I carried on with my life, drinking coffee, smoking, drinking alcohol - I work in events which is a very sociable job, going out a lot to parties, events etc.... As I turned 30 I noticed my palpitations coming back with more regular frequency. At any time of the day or night and would last for up to 2 hours. Then as quick as they started, they'd stop. I got scared to go out sometimes in case I'd have one and at work if I had a big meeting I'd feel the start of one (Instead of a heat beat my heart would flip flop). I started to notice 'triggers' - if I bent over to pick something up - stress and emotional stress - coffee - sometimes alcohol and smoking.

I went to my GP who took some blood and put me on 24 hour ECG - typically nothing showed up and I was discouraged from having such a 'busy' lifestyle by my GP. Shortly after that I gave up smoking. My attacks were happening nearly every month. On one occasion I was with a friend who told me it was absolutely not normal and she called an ambulance. After that my GP referred me to a cardiologist and I'm waiting for an ablation therapy on the NHS. I'm on Beta Blockers to help regulate the beats and although the side effects of this medication are not great they are currently stopping me from having any SVT attacks.