



The Heart Rhythm Charity

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## Electrophysiology Studies (EPS)

### Why do I need an electrophysiology study?

An electrophysiology study is a procedure conducted by a heart rhythm specialist (an electrophysiologist). It enables your doctor to analyse the function of the heart's electrical system and to determine the cause of your abnormal heart rhythms. It will assist him/her in making decisions in relation to future treatment.

### What does the procedure involve?

You may be asked to stop taking some of your medications for up to two weeks prior to the procedure. Your doctor/nurse should give you specific advice about this. You may also have some routine blood tests and a physical examination prior to the procedure.

An electrophysiology study is an invasive procedure, which is usually performed using local anaesthetic. You may also be given some sedation, which makes you feel relaxed and sleepy.

Small needle-punctures are made at the top of your legs that allow access to the heart via the veins. Fine wires which are electrical recording catheters are then passed through and positioned within the heart. Once the wires are in position, the doctor is able to record the electrical activity from specific areas of your heart.

Extra beats are also delivered using an external pacemaker, which may bring on your palpitations. This is necessary to see where the heart rhythm is coming from and whether you have an extra electrical connection in your heart. It is possible to put the heart back into normal rhythm within a few seconds.

### What are the benefits associated with the electrophysiology study?

The benefit of this 45-60 minute procedure is that it can enable your doctor to detect any abnormalities in the electrical system of your heart and its cause. An electrophysiology study can also assist you (the patient) in making decisions in relation to your future treatment.

### How long will I have to stay in hospital?

Almost all patients go home on the same day. However, your doctor may want to initiate further treatment whilst you are in hospital depending on the findings of your study. This will be discussed with you after your procedure. You should be able to carry on with normal activities the following day, but avoid heavy lifting for about two weeks afterwards.

Following the electrophysiology study it is quite common to be aware of your own heartbeat, even in normal rhythm. Some people are aware of extra or "missed beats". Try not to worry too much about these symptoms, which usually settle down with time.

For further information contact Arrhythmia Alliance



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