



Image: The Yorkshire Heart Centre Jubilee Building, Leeds General Infirmary.

# Your Cardioversion Explained

Information Booklet for  
Patients and their Families

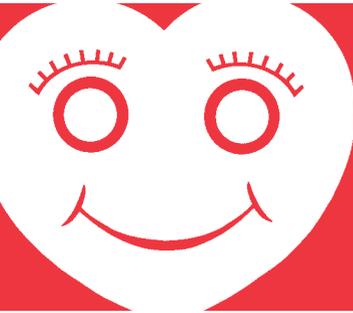


YORKSHIRE  
HEART CENTRE

The Leeds Teaching Hospitals  
NHS Trust



Please read about Take Heart at rear of this booklet



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Yorkshire Heart Centre

at Leeds General Infirmary,

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and its units within the

Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

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# YOUR CARDIOVERSION EXPLAINED

This booklet will provide you with information about your cardioversion.

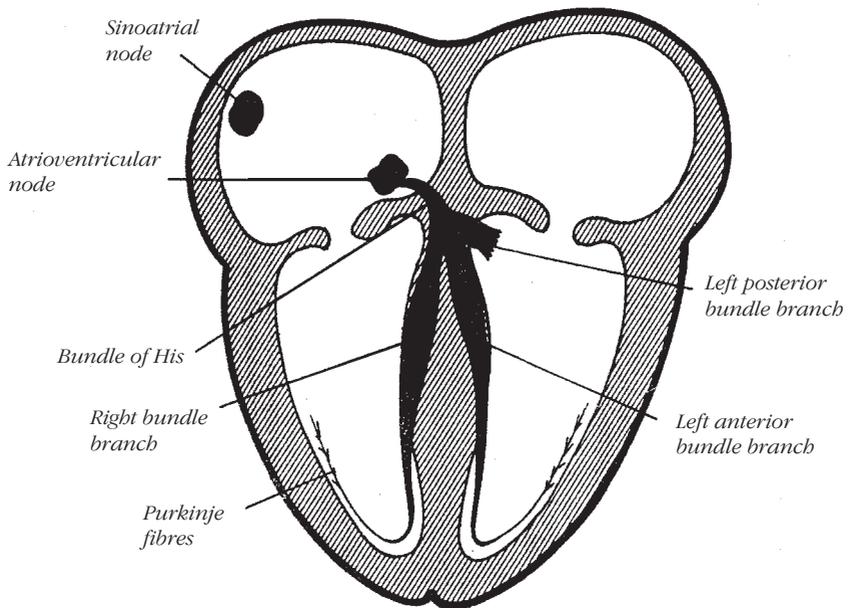
It will explain what having a cardioversion involves and what will happen during your hospital stay.

The ward staff and cardiology team would like your stay to be as pleasant as possible.

# THE HEART

The heart is composed of specialised cells that transmit waves of electrical activity throughout the heart. These waves of electrical activity start in the pacemaker of the heart called the Sino atrial node (SA node) and continue through the rest of the heart causing the heart to contract. These contractions produce the heart beat and blood is pumped to all organs of the body. In most people the heart rate at rest is 60 - 80 beats per minute. During exercise the pacemaker speeds up its discharge and the electrical activity increases. After rest the heart rate returns to normal.

*The electrical conduction pathway of the heart.*



# ABNORMAL HEART RHYTHM

Sometimes electrical signals arise in areas of the heart away from the normal pacemaker, this alone is not dangerous and the effect on the heart is minimal.

However if it becomes persistent and fast the heart can become less efficient at pumping the blood around the body. Individuals can experience palpitations and generally feel unwell. Fast, irregular beats (Tachycardia) can be treated with special drugs but if this is unsuccessful or unsuitable to the individual it can be treated by a method called CARDIOVERSION.

## CARDIOVERSION

This is the delivery of a small direct electrical current (a shock) to the heart in an attempt to interrupt the abnormal activity.

This interruption allows the pacemaker of the heart to step in and a normal rhythm to take over. The small electrical shock is delivered by a specialised machine called a Defibrillator. Two pads are placed on your chest and the defibrillator which has two paddles on it are placed over these pads and the electric shock is administered. You will be asleep during the procedure and therefore will **not feel** anything.

# PREPARATION FOR CARADIOVERSION

**Pre assessment Clinic.** You will be invited to attend a Nurse led Cardioversion Pre assessment Clinic, prior to your admission for the procedure.

At the clinic a Nurse will check your INR readings, record an ECG, take a blood test and complete the necessary paperwork to your admission. There will be an opportunity to ask questions.

Please note, that prior to attending the clinic, the INR readings, which are in your yellow Warfarin diary, should be at a level of 2.0 or over, consistently, for a period of four consecutive readings prior to admission. If you are unsure about the readings in your diary please contact the cardiology admission on 0113 392 3960/ 0113 392 8169.

You will be advised not to eat or drink anything for six hours prior to admission for the Cardioversion Procedure.

It is important to continue to take **ALL** your normal medications up to the procedure. You may drink a small amount of water with your medication on the morning of the procedure.

**Day of admission.** Your named nurse who will be responsible for your nursing care during your stay will admit you to the ward. The nurse will check your details, repeat an ECG and record your blood pressure and pulse.

You will be seen by a Doctor and Anaesthetist who will obtain your consent for the procedure and anaesthetic.

## **THE PROCEDURE**

The procedure will take place in a small anaesthetic room attached to the ward. The nurse will give you a gown and ask you to remove any dentures. You will be taken to the anaesthetic room on your bed or a trolley. You will have leads attached to your chest so that we can monitor your heart. You will be asked to lie flat with one pillow under your head (if possible).

A venflon (a small needle) will be placed in the back of your hand to allow the anaesthetist to give you medication to put you to sleep.

A doctor and an anaesthetist will be with you at all times. The anaesthetist will give you medication through the needle in your hand to put you to sleep, and you will be asked to breathe deeply into an oxygen mask. You will be asleep for a short while during which time the procedure will take place.

## **AFTER THE PROCEDURE**

When the procedure is over you will feel sleepy but awake. An oxygen mask may still be over your face and you may be lying on your side. The oxygen mask will be removed shortly and you will be able to sit upright. You may be attached to a heart monitor to observe your rhythm. The nurse will check your blood pressure, pulse and record an E. C. G. When you are fully awake you will

taken back to the ward. You will be able to eat and drink. The venflon will be removed.

You may be a little sore in the area where the paddles were placed but other complications are extremely rare.

You will be informed of your results by the doctor, if it has not been successful he/she will discuss future management with you. You will be given a letter for your G.P.

## **GOING HOME**

It is important that you arrange for somebody to pick you up and take you home. You should refrain from driving yourself for at least 24 hours. Further discharge information will be given to you by the nursing staff.

## **POINTS TO REMEMBER BEFORE YOUR ADMISSION**

1. Bring all your medication into hospital with you.
2. Do not eat or drink from 12.00 MIDNIGHT on the NIGHT BEFORE ADMISSION.
3. CONTINUE with your medication on the day of admission.

*Revised by: Allison Romaniw  
Ward 11, LGI  
October 2010*

# Membership Application

Membership of Take Heart is open to anyone for a once only fee of £1.50. In return you will receive a regular newsletter and the opportunity to participate in the club's activities.

Title: .....Surnames(s): .....

First Names: Member 1: .....

Member 2: .....

Address: .....

..... Postcode: .....

Telephone: .....

An attractive club badge is available at £1.00. Please indicate the quantity required in the box shown and add the cost to the Membership fee.

No of Badges required:

I enclose a cheque/postal order for £..... payable to TAKE HEART

# Donation Form

Donations should be sent to: The Secretary, Take Heart, The Yorkshire Heart Centre, 'F' Floor, Jubilee Wing, The General Infirmary at Leeds, Leeds LS1 3EX.

I would like to make a donation of £..... to TAKE HEART

Name: .....

Address: .....

..... Postcode: .....

If you are a UK taxpayer, the Charity can benefit further from your donation.

If you would like further details, please tick this box:

**PLEASE MAKE ALL CHEQUES PAYABLE TO TAKE HEART**

**Donations are always welcome and will be  
acknowledged, and published in our newsletter**

*Please send completed Membership/Donation Forms to:  
The Secretary, Take Heart, The Yorkshire Heart Centre, 'F' Floor, Jubilee Wing,  
The General Infirmary at Leeds, LS1 3EX. Tel: 0113 392 2888. Fax: 0113 392 5222.*

Registered Charity No. 1002063



# We Are Take Heart

Take Heart is a small, but professional charity, run on a completely voluntary basis, raising funds exclusively for the Yorkshire Heart Centre at Leeds General Infirmary, St James's hospital and its units within The Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust. We were founded in 1989 by a small number of heart patients wishing to return something for the excellent care received.

From a small beginning, we have raised over three million pounds and this has been used to provide comfort and enhance the surroundings for the many thousands who visit the centre every year. We have also made significant progress in supporting staff in their work and improve their working environment.

Some of the major achievements of the charity are the provision of a suite of relatives rooms available free of charge when required, a roof garden providing a peaceful area for patients and relatives, and an internal garden. We provide free bedside television, free telephone calls and free internet for all patients on the heart wards and we have recently provided changing rooms for an additional MRI scanner. Take Heart have refurbished most waiting areas and made sure that patients enjoy comfort of the highest standard. We also fund information booklets (such as the one you are now reading) which are available in all the Heart Centre wards.

Look around and you will see that all the bedside furniture in the heart wards was provided by Take Heart. We also provide equipment to help bring the latest technology into the centre which, in some cases, helps to reduce waiting times. Our latest major projects include two new portable echo machines and an Intracoronary Optical Coherence Tomography Scanner, (catheter-based invasive imaging systems using light rather than ultrasound for detailed examination of stents), costing in excess of £165,000 and complete refurbishment of the Roof Garden and spent some £60,000 on a major refurbishment of Ward L16.

Take Heart funds are raised in many ways - through donations - events - sponsorship, and bequests, mainly through its thousands of members and supporters.

We would love you to become a member of Take Heart. As a member, you will receive our newsletter about five times a year and if you wish to take part in anything, this is absolutely at your choice. Please note that you will never be bombarded with follow-up mail. You can join by going to our web site [www.takeheart.net](http://www.takeheart.net) or picking up a form from any ward reception area.

Use your SmartPhone to visit our website > > >



Colin Pullan, MBE  
Chairman, Take Heart.

**For more information contact:**

Take Heart, 'F' Floor, Jubilee Building, Leeds General Infirmary, Leeds LS1 3EX.

Tel: 0113 392 2888. Fax: 0113 392 5222

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*Further information regarding this booklet and its reproduction can be obtained from:  
Cardiac Rehabilitation Services, 'F' Floor, Jubilee Wing, Leeds General Infirmary, Leeds LS1 3EX.  
Tel: 0113 392 8110 or 0113 392 5639*