



*Understanding
the Rhythm
of your
Heart*



Marshfield Clinic



MINISTRY HEALTH CARE



Two Leaders, One Leading Heart Care Team

Does your heart race or feel like it's fluttering?

If so, you may be one of the 2.2 million* Americans with a heart arrhythmia.

Understanding Arrhythmias

The heart, like all muscles in the body, is controlled by tiny electrical signals the body generates. An electrical signal spreads from the top of the heart to the bottom with each heartbeat. As it travels, the signal causes the chambers of the heart to contract and pump blood, a process repeated with each new heartbeat. These electrical signals set the rhythm of your heart. Doctors can monitor your heart's electrical activity using an electrocardiogram, also known as an EKG.

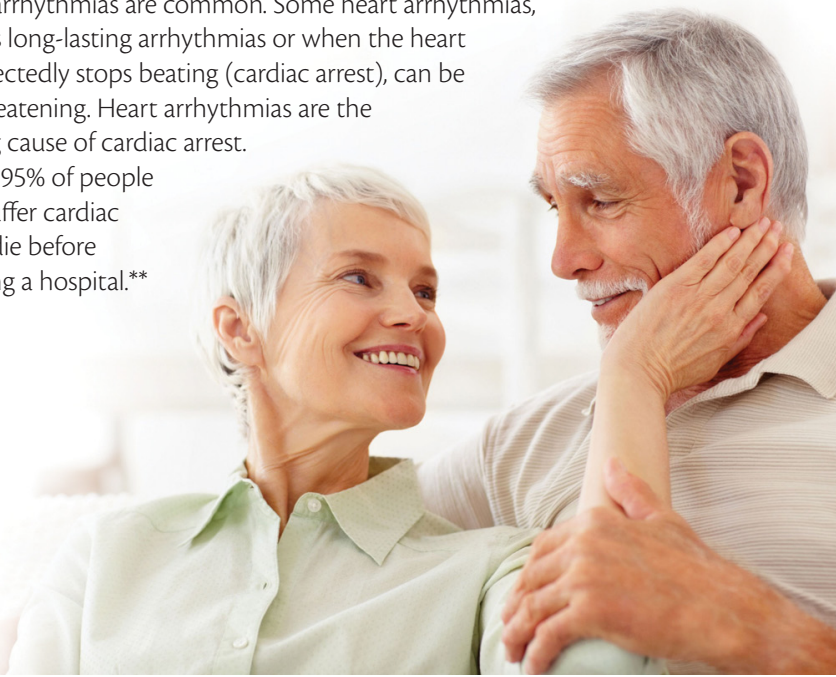


What is a Heart Arrhythmia?

The term “arrhythmia” refers to any change from the normal sequence of electrical impulses. A change in these impulses may cause the heart to beat too fast, too slowly or erratically.

Heart arrhythmias are common. Some heart arrhythmias, such as long-lasting arrhythmias or when the heart unexpectedly stops beating (cardiac arrest), can be life-threatening. Heart arrhythmias are the leading cause of cardiac arrest.

About 95% of people who suffer cardiac arrest die before reaching a hospital.**





TOO FAST OR TOO SLOW

Your heart rate naturally varies. It's slower when you're at rest and faster when you're active. If it fails to adjust correctly as needed over a prolonged period of time, serious problems can develop. Beating too fast stresses the heart. Beating too slowly reduces blood flow to the brain.

OUT OF SYNC

Some arrhythmias are caused by garbled electrical signals. They make the heart's chambers open and close out of sequence, disrupting the flow of blood. This can lead to dizziness, weakness, fatigue or even death.

Symptoms of Heart Arrhythmia

You shouldn't panic if you experience a few flutters occasionally. However, if you experience this in conjunction with these symptoms, contact your physician for a check-up:

- Weakness/Fatigue
- Dizziness
- Shortness of breath
- Palpitations
- Fainting
- Heart pounding or racing
- Chest pain

Causes and Risks

Arrhythmias can affect anyone at any age, but people with underlying heart disease are at the highest risk. It is important to talk to your doctor if you have a family history of heart disease or heart arrhythmia. Additionally, certain medicines, drugs and herbal remedies can increase your chance of heart arrhythmia.

There are several controllable risk factors that can increase your risk for heart disease and heart arrhythmias:

- High blood pressure
- Smoking
- Diabetes
- High cholesterol
- Obesity
- Stress
- Excessive alcohol use

Manage these risk factors, along with any existing heart conditions, and follow a healthy lifestyle to reduce your likelihood of developing heart arrhythmia problems.

For more information about controlling risk factors for heart disease, visit www.oneheartcareteam.org and click on **YOUR HEART**.

Why Seeing an Electrophysiologist is Important

An Electrophysiologist is like an Electrician for Your Heart

A heart doctor is called a cardiologist. Cardiologists who specialize in the electrical impulses that control the heart are called electrophysiologists. All electrophysiologists are cardiologists, but not all cardiologists are electrophysiologists.

*The Marshfield Clinic and Ministry Health Care
heart care team has the largest
and most experienced team
of electrophysiologists in the region.*

Typically, a patient will be referred to a cardiologist by their family physician or by a physician in a walk-in clinic or emergency room. The cardiologist would then determine if an electrophysiologist's specialized knowledge and skills would be needed.

Around Central and Northern Wisconsin, only the Marshfield Clinic and Ministry Health Care heart care team has multiple electrophysiologists on staff. One of the many advanced procedures performed by these specialists is the minimally invasive catheter ablation. It's a non-surgical way to treat heart arrhythmias that reduces complications and recovery time.

Local access to this advanced care can be crucial if you have a heart arrhythmia because the care you need is right here on our team. You don't need to face any extra delays in diagnosis or treatment traveling to Madison, Milwaukee or Minnesota.



CERTAINTY

ARE YOU CERTAIN YOU'RE SEEING
THE RIGHT PHYSICIAN FOR YOUR HEART?

The Right Care is Right Here

The Marshfield Clinic and Ministry Health Care heart care team is recognized for providing some of the best heart care in the nation.

If another provider wants you to travel to a distant specialist, be sure to ask about closer options. You have the right to choose your doctor. You also have the right to get a second opinion.

The Marshfield Clinic and Ministry Health Care heart care team has the most extensive roster of specialists in the region. Our physicians handle more of the most complex cases and are involved in more clinical research than any other area provider.

No matter what kind of heart care you need, you have access to more options with the Marshfield Clinic and Ministry Health Care heart care team than with any other local provider.

Choose the certainty of customized care.

*Choose the Marshfield Clinic and Ministry Health Care
heart care team.*

To find a primary care provider in your area,
please visit us online at www.oneheartcareteam.org

LOCAL ACCESS TO ADVANCED CARE



Marshfield Clinic heart specialists are available for appointments and consultations in these cities.

- Cardiologists
- Electrophysiologists

 **Marshfield Clinic**
 **MINISTRY HEALTH CARE**



Two Leaders, One Leading Heart Care Team

For a second opinion, or for more information on our heart care team, call us at **1-800-888-4755**