



North Devon Defib Newsletter

Summer Issue: 2015

Welcome to our third North Devon Defib Newsletter.

The newsletter aims to provide support and information about how an ICD works and give advice enabling you to lead a full and active life.

In this issue we will:

- ◇ Give feedback from the defib support group meetings
- ◇ Focus on exercise for patients with an ICD
- ◇ Provide contact details for the support teams

ICD Support Group

Thank you to everyone who attended the last patient support group meeting in July. As always the meeting was well attended and feedback once again confirms how valuable the advice and support from each other is.

Dr Roberts, Consultant Cardiologist, gave a presentation on exercise. For those of you who were unable to attend, the focus of this newsletter is on exercise suitable for patients with defibrillators.

The next meeting will be in September, hopefully early evening to enable those unable to attend during the day to benefit from the group.

Details of the next meeting are below and further details are also enclosed.

Exercise advice for patients with an ICD

Research has shown that physical activity and exercise are beneficial for people fitted with an ICD. Your underlying heart condition will influence your ability to exercise, and may cause shortness of breath, fatigue or chest pain - these should not be ignored.

Physical activity and exercise should be progressed slowly. It is important to avoid becoming too breathless during exercise. All exercise sessions should start with a warm-up and finish with a cool-down period - both of which should last for approximately 10 minutes.

An exercise intensity of between 60-75% of your target heart rate (220 minus age) or if you are taking beta blocker medication, minus another 20bpm, is sufficient to bring about significant health benefits and improve fitness and endurance. The key is to avoid becoming too breathless during exercise, as this will sap your strength and overload your cardiovascular system.

If you find it difficult to find your pulse, think 'Sing, Talk, Gasp'.

Whilst exercising can you:

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Sing? | Yes - you're not doing enough |
| Hold a conversation? | Yes - You're doing the right amount |
| Gasping? | Yes - You're doing too much |

DATE FOR YOUR DIARY

**The next ICD support group meeting will take place on
Monday 25th September 2015 at 6pm.**

**The guest speaker will be Phillip Cooney,
Device Company Representative**

**This will be held at Christchurch, Bear Street,
Barnstaple EX32 7BU**

**North Devon Defib Newsletter Summer Issue: 2015****Exercise advice for patients with an ICD continued**

In general, most exercises should be performed standing, with lying down and seated arm exercises with weights kept to a minimum. These may increase the workload on your heart too much, leading to an increased likelihood of an arrhythmia.

You should be careful of any contact sports. Bruising or breaking the skin over the device site may lead to infection. Swimming can be undertaken once the implant wound is fully healed. It is recommended not to swim alone in a private pool. It is advised that you should be accompanied for all water sports so that they can get you out of the water if your ICD fires.

Most abnormal rhythms treated by an ICD will be significantly faster than your normal heart rate would reach, even with strenuous exercise. If you are planning to undertake anything other than recreational exercise or exercise to lose weight, it would be worthwhile checking how your ICD is programmed. It needs to recognise abnormal heart rates that are close to those achieved when you are exercising.

If your ICD was implanted for arrhythmias which may be triggered specifically by exercise (some Long QT Syndromes), or if you are concerned about your safe exercise level, you should ask your Cardiologist, Arrhythmia / Heart Failure team or ICD clinic for advice. For further information on exercise advice contact Arrhythmia Alliance - details below.

**HEART RHYTHM
CONGRESS 2015**
Patient Day
Sunday 4th October 2015
For more information contact:
info@heartrhythmcharity.org.uk
Or Tel: 01789 867501

Local Walking for Health groups

These groups aim to help you enjoy the benefits of walking, enabling you to become fitter for life. Walking is the best form of exercise available for everyone, young and old, and for all abilities. It has the benefit of being safe, free and low impact. It is also a great way to meet people, make new friends and enjoy the open air.

For further information on a group near to you please contact:

Anita Griggs Tel 01237 420130 / 07979475579 or email anitag@torridge.org.uk or visit www.walkingforhealth.org.uk/walkfinder

Useful links:

British Heart Foundation Tel: 020 7935 0185 - Website: www.bhf.org.uk

Arrhythmia Alliance Tel: 01789 450 787 - Website: <http://heartrhythmcharity.org.uk>

Cardiomyopathy Association Tel: 01923 249977 - Website: www.cardiomyopathy.org

Arrhythmia Service

Sarah Bryant
01271 311633

Heart Failure Service

Angie Tithecott and
Rebecca Nicholls
01271 311633

Cardiac Rehabilitation

01271 311838

Cardiologist Secretaries

Dr Tim Roberts 01271 322418

Dr Chris Gibbs 01271 314131

Dr Dushen Tharmaratnam 01271 322438



Above: Dr Chris Gibbs, Dr Tim Roberts,
Dr Dushen Tharmaratnam

ICD Clinic**Cardio-Respiratory Dept**

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