

North Devon Defib Newsletter

Summer Issue: 2016

Welcome to our Fifth 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:

- ◇ Date for next defib support group meeting
- ◇ Medicine Cabinet: ACE Inhibitors

ICD Support Group

Thank you to everyone who attended the last patient support group meeting in March. Dr Tharmaratnam gave an interesting talk on ICD's. As always the meeting was well attended and feedback once again confirms how valuable the advice and support from each other is.

The next meeting will be on 20th September 2016.

Dr Candy Hayward, Clinical Psychologist, will be giving a presentation. Details enclosed

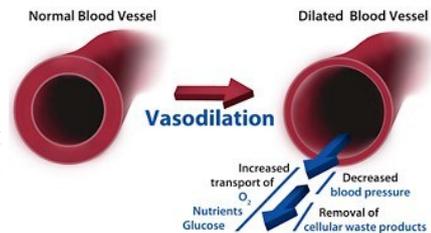


Medicine Cabinet: Focus on ACE inhibitors

ACE inhibitors are commonly used to treat heart failure and high blood pressure and is often prescribed to people following a heart attack. Common examples include: Ramipril, Lisinopril and Enalapril.

What are ACE inhibitors and how do they work?

Angiotensin-Converting Enzyme, or ACE for short, which is responsible for hormones that help control your blood pressure. It has a powerful narrowing effect on your blood vessels, which increases your blood pressure. **ACE inhibitors** inhibit or limit this enzyme, making your blood vessels relax and widen, which lowers your blood pressure and improves blood flow to your heart muscle. A quarter of the blood pumped out in each heartbeat flows through the kidneys, so by improving blood flow ACE inhibitors improve kidney, as well as heart, function.



There are various types of ACE inhibitor. What are the main differences?

The main difference between the ACE inhibitors is how long their effects last i.e. short or long-acting. Long acting tablets are usually taken once daily and short acting twice daily. Each drug comes in a range of strengths and usually start on a low-strength drug and work up to a higher strengths as people get used to them.

What are the possible side effects?

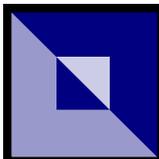
A common side effect is low blood pressure, which can make you feel dizzy, and should be reported to your doctor. About one in ten people experience a dry, irritating cough. Your GP may decide to provide an alternative medication, but it's worth noting that it can take 8 to 12 weeks for the cough to disappear. Less common side effects include swelling of the lips, eyes or tongue (medication should be stopped immediately and your doctor informed) and a decline in kidney function (a blood test is usually required 1 - 2weeks after starting or increasing your medication).

Are there any foods I should avoid?

Salt raises blood pressure and worsens heart failure. It also specifically reduces the effects of ACE inhibitors. You should avoid high salt foods and avoid adding extra salt. Low salt preparations should also be avoided.

Are there any possible alternatives?

Angiotensin receptor blockers (ARBs) have a similar effect to ACE inhibitors, but without causing patients to develop a cough. However, since there are more studies showing the benefits with ACE inhibitors, they are usually used first.



Anxiety and Depression

Depression is often experienced by people who have had a major heart event. It's estimated that a fifth of people with long term conditions have depression, which can have a devastating impact on health and quality of life.

Following acute cardiac events such as myocardial infarction, up to 20% of individuals will have a major depressive episode within a few weeks. Depressive symptoms are present in around 25% of people with congestive heart failure.

What is depression?

There are many different symptoms, these are some of the most common:

- Tiredness and loss of energy
- Persistent sadness
- Loss of confidence and self-esteem
- Difficulty concentrating and making decisions
- Avoiding others and becoming isolated and lonely
- Not being able to enjoy things that are usually pleasurable or interesting
- Undue feelings of guilt or worthlessness
- Feelings of helplessness and hopelessness
- Sleeping problems - difficulties in getting off to sleep or waking much earlier than usual
- Finding it hard to function at work/college/school
- Change in appetite
- Loss of sex drive and/ or sexual problems
- Physical aches and pains
- Thinking about suicide and death
- Self-harm

If you are concerned that you may be depressed, contact your GP or local Depression and Anxiety Service (DAS). They will look at options with you which are based on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT). It cannot remove your problems, but it can

help you deal with them in a more positive way. It is based on the concept that your thoughts, feelings, physical sensations and actions are interconnected, and that negative thoughts and feelings can trap you in a vicious cycle. CBT aims to help you crack this cycle by breaking down overwhelming problems into smaller parts and showing you how to change these negative patterns to improve the way you feel.

To contact the DAS service Tel: 01271 335041 email: dpn-tr.NorthDevonDAS@nhs.net

HEART RHYTHM CONGRESS 2015

Patient Day

Sunday 9th October 2016

For more information contact:
info@heartrhythmcharity.org.uk
or Tel: 01789 867501

Useful websites

www.devonpartnership.nhs.uk
looking after yourself section
www.nhs.uk/Conditions/stress-anxiety-depression
www.depressionalliance.org
www.bhf.org.uk/publications/stress/coping-with-stress

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>

Arrhythmia Service

Sarah Bryant
01271 311633

Cardiologist Secretaries

Dr Tim Roberts 01271 322418
Dr Chris Gibbs 01271 314131
Dr Dushen Tharmaratnam 01271 322438

Heart Failure Service

Angie Tithecott, Rebecca Nicholls
& Poppy Brooks
01271 311633

ICD Clinic

Cardio-Respiratory Dept

Christine Pope, Lead Physiologist
01271 322475