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Heart palpitations in adults: Symptom Checker

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**MCV Related tag(s)**

**Primary Location**

Diseases and Conditions

**Tease**

Heart palpitations are racing, uncomfortable or irregular heartbeats or a "flopping" sensation in your chest. Identify possible common causes based on symptoms you're experiencing.

**Abstract**

Find possible causes of heart palpitations in adults. See our Symptom Checker.

**Benefit Summary**

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Adult

**ENTER IN FARCRY:**

**When to get medical help** (1; 2, p. 743)

See your doctor if you experience heart palpitations. Most often heart palpitations don't present a significant health risk, but they can be caused by a serious illness. It's important to get a prompt, accurate diagnosis and appropriate care.

Get emergency medical care if heart palpitations are accompanied by:

Chest pain that lasts more than a few minutes

Dizziness, lightheadedness or fainting

Shortness of breath

**Self-care strategies**

Because of the nature of this symptom, it's best to contact your health care provider. Please see the "Seek Care" section to determine an appropriate course of action.

**More Information**

Heart palpitations DS01139

**END OF FARCRY TEXT**

Find possible causes of heart palpitations based on specific factors. Check one or more factors on this page that apply to your symptom.

**Palpitations often occur when**

You're anxious or stressed

You're exerting yourself

You're resting or going to bed

**Heart rate is**

Faster than normal

Irregular or not steady

Slower than normal

**Preceded by use of**

Caffeine or alcohol

Cigarettes or recreational drugs

Medications or herbal supplements

**Accompanied by**

Chest pain or discomfort

Dizziness or lightheadedness

Fainting

Headache

Nausea

Nervousness

Persistent cough

Shortness of breath

Sudden weight loss

Sweating

Tremors

Trouble sleeping

Unexplained fatigue

**Possible causes**

These diseases and conditions match at least one of the factors you selected. Those with the most matches are listed first.

DS00291 Atrial fibrillation (2, p. 744; 3)

Palpitations often occur when you're anxious or stressed

Palpitations often occur when you're exerting yourself

Heart rate is irregular or not steady

Preceded by use of caffeine or alcohol

Preceded by use of cigarettes or recreational drugs

Preceded by use of medications or herbal supplements

Accompanied by chest pain or discomfort

Accompanied by dizziness or lightheadedness

Accompanied by fainting

Accompanied by shortness of breath

DS00947 Bradycardia (2, p. 744; 4)

Heart rate is slower than normal

Accompanied by chest pain or discomfort

Accompanied by dizziness or lightheadedness

Accompanied by fainting

Accompanied by shortness of breath

DS00290 Heart arrhythmias (2, p. 744; 5, p. 326-327; 6)

Palpitations often occur when you're anxious or stressed

Palpitations often occur when you're exerting yourself

Heart rate is faster than normal

Heart rate is irregular or not steady

Heart rate is slower than normal

Preceded by use of caffeine or alcohol

Preceded by use of cigarettes or recreational drugs

Preceded by use of medications or herbal supplements

Accompanied by chest pain or discomfort

Accompanied by dizziness or lightheadedness

Accompanied by fainting

Accompanied by shortness of breath

DS00344 Hyperthyroidism (overactive thyroid) (4, p. 326; 7)

Heart rate is faster than normal

Heart rate is irregular or not steady

Accompanied by nervousness

Accompanied by sudden weight loss

Accompanied by sweating

Accompanied by tremors

Accompanied by trouble sleeping

Accompanied by unexplained fatigue

SD00338 Panic attacks and panic disorder (8)

Palpitations often occur when you're anxious or stressed

Heart rate is faster than normal

Accompanied by chest pain or discomfort

Accompanied by dizziness or lightheadedness

Accompanied by headache

Accompanied by nausea

Accompanied by nervousness

Accompanied by shortness of breath

Accompanied by sweating

Accompanied by tremors

DS00949 Premature ventricular contractions (PVCs) (9)

Palpitations often occur when you're anxious or stressed

Palpitations often occur when you're resting or going to bed

Heart rate is irregular or not steady

Preceded by use of caffeine or alcohol

Preceded by use of cigarettes or recreational drugs

Preceded by use of medications or herbal supplements

DS00929 Tachycardia (2, p. 744; 10)

Palpitations often occur when you're anxious or stressed

Palpitations often occur when you're exerting yourself

Heart rate is faster than normal

Preceded by use of caffeine or alcohol

Preceded by use of cigarettes or recreational drugs

Preceded by use of medications or herbal supplements

Accompanied by chest pain or discomfort

Accompanied by dizziness or lightheadedness

Accompanied by fainting

Accompanied by shortness of breath

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