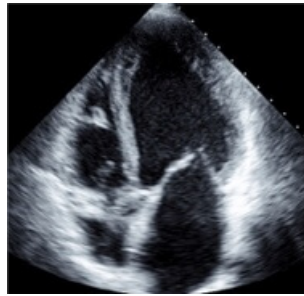


# DILATED CARDIOMYOPATHY

Dilated cardiomyopathy is a heart muscle abnormality in which the heart is enlarged and doesn't contract normally. Causes include viral inflammation of the heart, excess alcohol intake and underlying coronary heart disease.



## HOW COMMON IS IT?

Dilated cardiomyopathy affects approximately 1 in 2000 of the population.

## WHAT SYMPTOMS MIGHT I GET?

If the heart function is significantly impaired, a dilated cardiomyopathy can result in symptoms of breathlessness, fatigue and ankle swelling. Some patients can develop abnormalities of their heart rhythm.

## WHAT EXTRA TESTS ARE REQUIRED?

You may require further imaging of your heart with a cardiac MRI or coronary angiogram to exclude underlying heart artery abnormalities. Some blood tests will be needed.

## WILL I NEED TREATMENT?

You will need to take medication, not just to help reduce symptoms, but also to help protect you in the future. Some patients require a pacemaker to help improve heart function.

## IS IT HEREDITARY?

It can be. We recommend screening of immediate family members if no other cause has been identified.

## DOES THIS AFFECT MY LIFE EXPECTANCY?

It can do. Unfortunately patients with dilated cardiomyopathy can develop progressive heart failure, shortening their life.

## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

If you have been diagnosed with a dilated cardiomyopathy then an appointment can be made with a local cardiologist to discuss further investigation and treatment options.

## USEFUL LINKS

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dilated\\_cardiomyopathy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dilated_cardiomyopathy)

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HeartforLife

[www.heartforlife.co.uk](http://www.heartforlife.co.uk)

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