LONG QT SYNDROME (LQTS)

Long QT syndrome (LQTS) is an abnormality of the heart in which electrical channels increase the risk of dangerous heart rhythms. There are several different types of LQTS and the condition is a recognised cause of sudden cardiac death in children and adults.

HOW COMMON IS IT?

LQTS affects approximately 1 in 5000 of the population.

WHAT SYMPTOMS MIGHT I GET?

Usually none, although some patients describe symptoms of palpitation and recurrent blackouts. Symptoms can be provoked by exercise or swimming (LQT1), when the patient is startled or awoken suddenly (LQT2) or during sleep (LQT3).

WHAT EXTRA TESTS ARE REQUIRED?

Most patients will require extra testing with an exercise tolerance test and 24 hour ambulatory ECG monitor. Genetic testing can be helpful in some cases.

WILL I NEED TREATMENT?

The treatment depends on the type. Most patients are advised to avoid competitive sport. Drug therapy with betablockers can help suppress abnormal heart rhythm changes. Some patients require implantation of a pacemaker or implantable cardioverter defibrillator.

IS IT HEREDITARY?

Yes, it is often inherited from either your mother or father but sporadic cases do occur. For this reason we recommend that your parents and any brother, sisters and children you have be screened for the condition.

DOES THIS AFFECT MY LIFE EXPECTANCY?

Most patients with lead an entirely normal life but LQTS is a recognised cause of sudden cardiac death.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

If you have been diagnosed with LQTS then an appointment can be made with your local cardiologist to discuss further investigations and treatment options.

USEFUL LINKS

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Long_QT_syndrome

Heart for Life

www.heartforlife.co.uk

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