

# What is Supraventricular Tachycardia (SVT)?

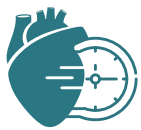
**SVT** is a sudden, very fast heartbeat.

SVTs:

- ▶ Start and stop suddenly
- ▶ Last for **seconds to hours**, sometimes longer
- ▶ Are **caused by an abnormal signal** in the upper part of the heart
- ▶ Can occur even in young people with healthy hearts

While it can feel scary, SVT is not usually dangerous, and it can be treated.

## What it feels like



A racing or pounding heartbeat



Heart palpitations, flutter



Dizziness, feeling lightheaded



Shortness of breath



Chest discomfort

In rare cases, you might faint. Seek care right away if this happens!

## How it's treated

Treatment depends on:

- How often you have symptoms
- How it affects your life
- Your specific type of SVT

Therapies may include:



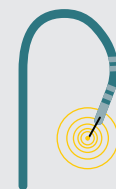
### Vagal maneuvers

Simple actions to help slow the heart:

- Coughing
- Holding your breath and bearing down (as with a bowel movement)
- Splashing cold water on your face

### Medications

To slow or control the heart rate



### Ablation

A procedure to treat or fix the faulty signal in the heart

SVT can be hard to detect because it:

- Comes and goes
- Often has no clear trigger



Writing down when symptoms occur and wearing a heart monitor can help with diagnosis.

Over time, SVT can become more frequent, last longer and be less likely to respond to vagal maneuvers. Talk with your care team.



Normal heart rate - 60-100 beats per minute (BPM) at rest



SVT - sudden jump to 150-250 BPM or more

150+ BPM

For more information, visit [CardioSmart.org/SVT](https://www.CardioSmart.org/SVT)

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