

# 8 tips to get the most from a heart monitor

Your care team should go over the instructions with you. In general, it's also a good idea to:



1. **Wear the heart monitor as much as you can.** Most are intended to be worn all the time - even while you sleep.



2. **Make sure the leads (wires) or sensors are secure** and in the right position.



3. **Avoid getting it wet.** Some monitors are water-resistant, meaning that you can take a shower. But taking baths or swimming are not advised while wearing one.



4. **Not use oils or creams on the skin near where the sensors are placed.** Oils or creams might cause the sensors to come loose. If the device is irritating your skin, let your care team know. Also, tell your care team if you are allergic or sensitive to tape or other adhesives on skin.



5. **Activate a recording as soon as you feel symptoms to mark the time.** Many monitors have a button or some other way of telling the device to save information about your heart activity if and when you have symptoms.



6. **Keep a diary of symptoms**, as well as what you were doing at the time, to give your care team a more complete picture of what you feel. No matter which device you use, write down your symptoms and when you have them so that you and your care team can see if they match up to any abnormal heartbeats or rhythms that are found.

## Common symptoms

Not everyone has or notices symptoms, but you might feel:

- Palpitations (your heart feels like it is flip-flopping, skipping beats, or racing)
- Short of breath
- Lightheaded or dizzy
- Like passing out or have unexplained fainting spells
- Chest pain, discomfort or pressure
- Overly tired



7. **Make sure you have a strong Internet connection** if the monitor you are using sends data for ongoing review and reporting to your care team.



8. **Ask if you need to avoid magnets, electric blankets or other situations** that could affect how well the monitor works.



## Questions to ask

You may have questions about heart rhythm monitoring, why it is being recommended and what the information tells you. It can be helpful to write down a list of questions to ask your heart care team during your next visit

### Some common questions:

- Why are you recommending this type of heart monitor over others?
- How will wearing it affect my regular activities at work, being active, or bathing?
- Do I need to do anything when I have symptoms or does the device automatically record what's happening with my heart?
- How do I know if the monitor is working?
- What are the downsides if we don't do any monitoring?
- Do I need to avoid magnets or other things that can disrupt the signal between the sensors and the device?
- I've heard some monitors that stick to the chest can irritate the skin. What can I do about it?
- Will my insurance cover monitoring?
- Is there value in using my smartphone or watch to monitor my heart rhythm or heart rate? How will I know what the information means or when to call?