

Cardiac monitoring

This leaflet explains more about cardiac monitoring on our wards, including the benefits and what you can expect while you are staying on one of our monitored wards.

If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you.

What is cardiac monitoring?

Cardiac monitoring is a way of watching the electrical activity of your heart to ensure it is working normally. Five small stickers, called electrodes, are placed on your body. These are connected either to a small box (a telemetry box) or a large screen on the wall (a wall monitor).

A signal is then sent to a special screen at the nurses' station, where ward staff can watch the activity of your heart 24 hours a day.

Why do I need cardiac monitoring?

Because of your medical condition, a recent procedure you've had or medication you are taking, we need to watch carefully for any abnormal heart rhythms or irregular beats.

Cardiac monitoring is routine for many patients' care and is nothing to worry about.

What are the risks?

Cardiac monitoring is painless and won't hurt you.

In rare cases, your skin may become irritated under the electrodes - if you notice any redness or itching, speak to your nurse, who may be able to use a less irritating kind of electrode.

What should I do if the electrodes or the wires fall off?

Don't try to put them back on – it is important to let the nurse know straightaway so they can put them back in the right places.

Why does the nurse or healthcare assistant still measure my blood pressure and other vital signs?

The cardiac monitor only tells us about your heart's electrical activity - it cannot measure blood pressure, temperature, oxygen levels or anything else. It also cannot provide any therapy.

Why do the alarms go off?

Alarms can be set off by important changes in your heart rate and rhythm, but are often caused by other things such as disconnected leads, low battery or a bad connection.

If the alarms go off too often or are disturbing you, please speak to a member of ward staff.

If you are connected to a monitor



What can I do while I am being monitored?

You must remain near your bed and stay connected at all times.

What if I need to use the toilet?

If you need to use the toilet, speak to a member of staff and they will bring a commode, or supervise you while you are disconnected if it is safe to do so.

Do not disconnect yourself.

If you have a telemetry box



What can I do while I am being monitored?

You can move around the ward freely.

Check with your nurse before leaving the ward and let them know where you are going.

Do not leave the floor your ward is on - you may go out of range of the monitoring system.

Can I shower?

Only if your telemetry box is in a special showerproof bag.

If any electrodes come loose, your nurse can replace them afterwards.

If you have any further questions, please speak to a doctor or nurse caring for you.

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit www.stgeorges.nhs.uk.

Additional services

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

PALS can offer you on-the-spot advice and information when you have comments or concerns about our services or the care you have received. You can visit the PALS office between 9.30am and 4.30pm, Monday to Friday in the main corridor between Grosvenor and Lanesborough Wing (near the lift foyer). **Tel:** 020 8725 2453 **Email:** pals@stgeorges.nhs.uk

NHS Choices

NHS Choices provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make decisions about your health.

Web: www.nhs.uk

NHS 111

You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. NHS 111 is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.



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