

Implantable Loop Recorder (ILR)

This leaflet explains what happens during the procedure to have an implantable loop recorder (ILR). It includes the benefits, risks and the alternatives. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to speak with the doctors and nurses caring for you.

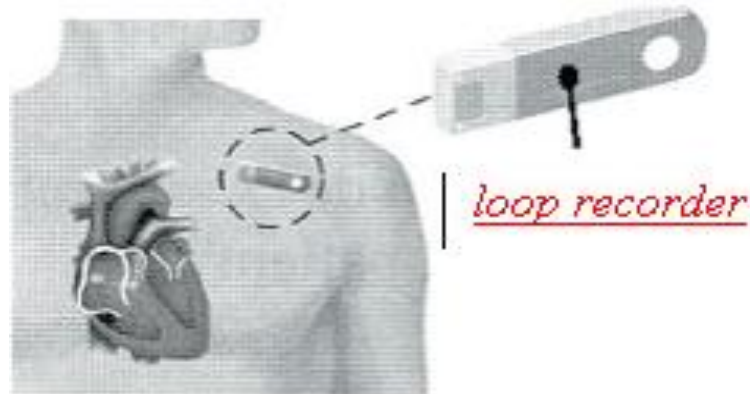
Confirming your Identity

Before you have a treatment or procedure, our staff will ask you your name and date of birth and check your ID band. If you don't have an ID band we will also ask you to confirm your address.

If we don't ask these questions, then please ask us to check. Ensuring your safety is our primary concern.

What is an implantable loop recorder (ILR)?

An ILR is a small, thin device, smaller than a USB/memory stick that is put under your skin to record your heart activity.



It automatically monitors and records your heart's electrical activity similar to an ECG. However, a loop recorder can record heart rhythm for up to three years. You can also self-monitor using an activator that will be provided for you to record periods of your heart rhythm if you have symptoms.

Why do I need an ILR?

You may be experiencing symptoms, such as palpitations, dizziness or loss of consciousness (blackouts/fainting), that may indicate an abnormality with your heart rhythms. These rhythm abnormalities can be very infrequent and difficult to capture on external heart monitors.

An ILR recorder allows monitoring of your heart rate and rhythm over a longer period. This may help us to find the cause of your symptoms and offer treatment as necessary.

What are the risks?

There is a small risk of bleeding, bruising and infection at the device insertion site. Your doctor or arrhythmia clinical nurse specialist (CNS) will discuss these risks with you before the procedure.

What are the benefits?

The diagnosis of a rhythm abnormality sometimes needs more than symptoms alone and an ECG monitoring may be required. An ILR recorder is often recommended where other monitoring options have not found a cause/diagnosis. Because the ILR can record for up to three years it allows monitoring of your heart rhythm over a longer period thus increasing the chances of recording sporadic rhythm events.

Are there any alternatives?

Holter monitors are often used in detecting arrhythmias but due to their short monitoring period (24 to 48 hours) they may not pick up your rhythm abnormality. This is why the loop recorder has been recommended by your doctor as the most appropriate monitoring option for your symptoms.

Consent

We must by law obtain your written consent to any operation and some other procedures beforehand. Staff will explain the risks, benefits and alternatives before they ask you to sign the consent form. If you are unsure about any aspect of the procedure or treatment proposed, please do not hesitate to speak with a member of staff again.

Implantation of an ILR

We will use a local anaesthetic to numb the insertion site for the implantation of the ILR recorder. We will then make a very small cut/incision to insert the ILR device. The device is normally placed under the skin in your upper chest but rarely it may need to be inserted under your arm. Once the device is in the right place under your skin, we close the small wound using skin glue and Steristrips (paper stitches) and cover it with wound dressing. Below is a YouTube link that you may want to watch prior to your implantation for a better understanding of what happens during the procedure.

[Reveal LINQ™ System Introduction for Patients - YouTube](#)

How long does the procedure take?

It takes about 15 to 20 minutes. You will be seen as a day case so you will not need to stay in hospital.

What happens after the procedure?

A specialist in understanding heart rhythms called a cardiac physiologist will do some more checks to make sure that your ILR recorder is working properly. They will also explain how and when to use your activator. We will give you a booklet with information relevant to your particular kind of loop recorder and an ID card which has important information about your loop recorder and its settings. Please carry this card with you at all times in case this information is needed urgently.

What happens when I go home?

You may have some pain at the insertion site of the ILR so take it easy for the rest of the day and take some paracetamol if needed. You are fine to go back to normal activities the next day.

Keep the wound clean and dry and remove the dressing and paper stitches four days post implantation.

Follow up

You will be seen in the Device clinic at approximately six to eight weeks post implantation of your device. You will then have a routine remote home monitoring every six to twelve months or sooner if you have any symptoms and/or activate the device.

Removing your ILR

Once your heart's activity has been recorded during your symptoms and your cardiologist is satisfied that any heart related causes are identified or excluded, the device will be removed.

The removal of the ILR is similar to when you had it implanted and can be carried out in a day clinic.

Contact us

If you or your family have any general queries or concerns about this procedure, contact the arrhythmia clinical nurse specialists or the Device clinic. Please leave a message and we will return your call as soon as possible.

Tel: 020 8 725 4140, 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday (Nurses)

Tel: 020 8725 1372, 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday (Physiologist/device team)

Email: stg.arrhythmianurses@stgeorges.nhs.uk

In an emergency, call 999 and ask for an ambulance.

Further information

- www.atrialfibrillation.org.uk
- www.arrhythmiaalliance.org.uk/
- www.bhf.org.uk
- www.gov.uk/government/organisations/driver-and-vehicle-licensing-agency

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 wings (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.

Tel: 111

AccessAble

You can download accessibility guides for all our services by searching 'St George's Hospital' on the AccessAble website (www.accessable.co.uk). The guides are designed to ensure everyone – including those with accessibility needs – can access our hospital and community sites with confidence.



Reference: CAR_ILR_01 **Published:** February 2022 **Review date:** February 2024