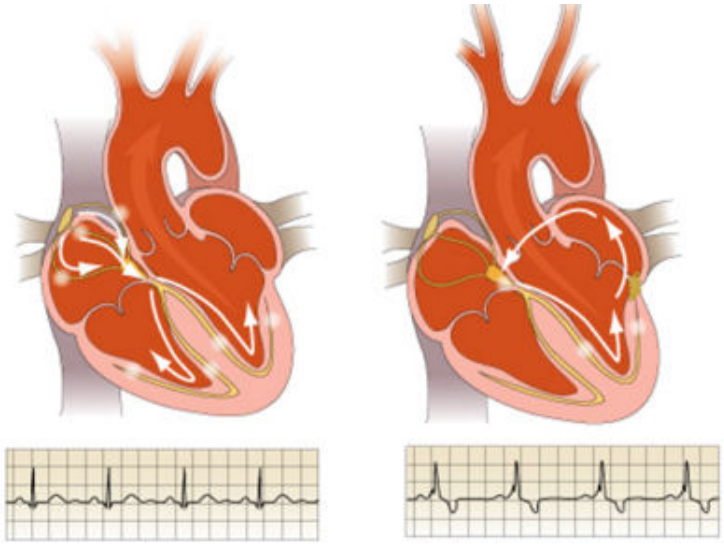
Wolff-Parkinson-White Syndrome (WPW)

Wolff-Parkinson-White Syndrome (WPW) is an abnormal heart condition that can cause the heart to beat very fast.



CAUSES

In WPW syndrome, an extra electrical connection (*pathway*) exists between the top chambers of your heart (*atria*) and the bottom chambers of your heart (*ventricles*). This is known as an extra (*accessory*) pathway. This extra pathway can cause the heart to short circuit and beat very fast.

SYMPTOMS

Symptoms in WPW syndrome can very. These include:

- Feeling your heart "skip" beats (*palpitations*).
- Dizziness.
- Fainting or near fainting.
- Sudden death.

DIAGNOSIS

WPW can be diagnosed by different test such as:

- ECG (electrocardiogram).
- Echocardiogram.
- Holter monitoring.
- Stress testing.
- Electrophysiology study.
- Laboratory tests that check certain blood levels.
- Thyroid study.

TREATMENT

WPW is usually treated in two ways:

- **Radiofrequency** destruction (*ablation*). In this procedure, a thin, flexible tube (*catheter*) is placed in the heart through a vein in the upper leg (*groin*). The catheter is guided to the extra pathway. The extra pathway is destroyed by using high frequency radio waves.
- **Medicine** can sometimes be used to treat WPW.

SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL CARE IF:

- You feel palpitations that are frequent or continual.
- You develop chest pain and also have:
  - Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing.
  - Nausea and vomiting.
  - Sweating.
- You become light-headed or faint (pass out).

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

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