

Physiologist Led Heart Valve Clinic

Cardiac Investigations

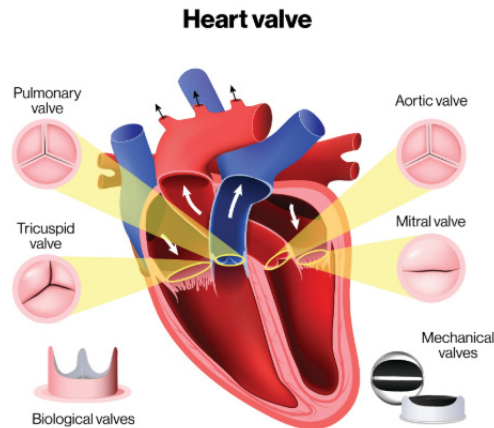
The prevention of infection is a major priority in all healthcare and everyone has a part to play.

- Please decontaminate your hands frequently for 20 seconds using soap and water or alcohol gel if available
- If you have symptoms of diarrhoea and/or vomiting, cough or other respiratory symptoms, a temperature or any loss of taste or smell please do not visit the hospital or any other care facility and seek advice from 111
- Keep the environment clean and tidy
- Let's work together to keep infections out of our hospitals and care homes.

Introduction

Heart valves are structures within the heart that ensure a one-way flow of blood. There are four valves within the heart:

- 2 on the left side of the heart called the aortic and the mitral valves
- 2 on the right side of the heart called the pulmonary and the tricuspid valves.



Valves open and close with every heartbeat which is over 86,000 times per day!

Heart valve disease

Heart valve disease is diagnosed when valve function or structure is abnormal. Some people are born with abnormalities of the heart valve structure (congenital abnormalities). Other valve diseases can be acquired either by degeneration over time, infection or previous rheumatic fever. Abnormal function of the valves includes the valves leaking (regurgitation) or having reduced opening (stenosis). Not all valve disease causes symptoms. It is therefore important to carefully monitor any significant changes in case specific treatment becomes required in future. A minority of patients may require surgery or a minimally invasive procedure to either repair or replace the valve, depending on a number of factors.

What is a Physiologist Led Heart Valve Clinic?

Cardiac Physiologists are highly trained health professionals who specialise in the heart and in performing specialist diagnostic tests. The valve clinic is a one-stop clinic whereby the Physiologist can complete a health assessment alongside diagnostic tests to provide an in-depth assessment of the condition and identify any significant progression. The results of which are used to guide further management or follow ups.

Before being seen in the valve clinic, your Consultant Cardiologist will confirm your eligibility and willingness to be followed up in these clinics. Although you may not see the doctor on your visit, the clinics are part of the multidisciplinary approach to patient focused care and are overseen by a Consultant Cardiologist. You will remain under the care of your original Consultant Cardiologist.

What to expect during your visit

The appointment should take between 40-60 minutes.

Please bring along a current list of your medication to the clinic.

During the appointment, you will be seen by one of our Specialised Physiologists who will undertake a health assessment (clinical history and examination) followed by any of the following diagnostic tests:

Transthoracic Echocardiogram: This is an ultrasound scan used to assess the structure and the function of the heart. It requires a bare chest, (but a gown will be provided for your comfort), and having the ultrasound probe placed at various points on the chest to obtain different views of the heart. Gel is used on the probe to ensure good contact, which might feel cold. This test should take between 20-30 minutes.

Electrocardiogram (ECG): This is a quick diagnostic test that places stickers on the chest and limbs. It takes a reading of the electrical activity of the heart.

Blood Pressure: A quick diagnostic test to check your blood pressure. A cuff is placed around the top of your arm. This is inflated and then slowly released.

If it is felt any other diagnostic tests (for example, bloods, chest X-ray) are required, this will be discussed with the Consultant Cardiologist.

What happens after the clinic?

At the end of the clinic, the Physiologist will discuss the preliminary findings and what the next steps will be. All clinics are discussed with the Consultant Cardiologist who oversees the clinic at the end of the day. A letter will be sent to you and your GP with the findings as well as to your Consultant Cardiologist. Timings for follow up appointments will be made in line with the current Heart Valve Guidelines from the British Society of Echocardiography.

What to do between clinics

It is important to maintain a healthy lifestyle, following a healthy diet and keeping your weight within a normal range. Gentle exercise is encouraged, however, please discuss this with your healthcare professional. If you smoke, it is advisable that you stop. Your GP can guide you to support for this. If you are planning pregnancy, you should discuss this with your healthcare professional first and let them know immediately if you become pregnant. Patients with heart valve disease should maintain good oral hygiene and visit the dentist regularly.

What symptoms to look out for

If you experience any changes or worsening of the following symptoms in between clinics then it is important to let us know.

- Increasing Shortness of Breath (with exercise or lying flat)
- Severe or increasing ankle swelling
- Chest pain or tightness
- Dizziness or blackouts on exertion
- Recurrent fevers and/or unintentional weight loss

Contact details

Address: **Cardiac Investigations Department**

Location B4

New Cross Hospital

Tel: 01902 694220

English

If you need information in another way like easy read or a different language please let us know.

If you need an interpreter or assistance please let us know.

Lithuanian

Jeigu norėtumėte, kad informacija jums būtų pateikta kitu būdu, pavyzdžiui, supaprastinta forma ar kita kalba, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Jeigu jums reikia vertėjo ar kitos pagalbos, prašome mums apie tai pranešti.

Polish

Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać te informacje w innej postaci, na przykład w wersji łatwej do czytania lub w innym języku, prosimy powiedzieć nam o tym.

Prosimy poinformować nas również, jeżeli potrzebowaliby Państwo usługi tłumaczenia ustnego lub innej pomocy.

Punjabi

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਕਿਸੇ ਹੋਰ ਰੂਪ ਵਿਚ, ਜਿਵੇਂ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਵਿਚ ਆਸਾਨ ਰੂਪ ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਜੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿਚ, ਚਾਹੀਦੀ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀ ਜਾਂ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਸਾਨੂੰ ਦੱਸੋ।

Romanian

Dacă aveți nevoie de informații în alt format, ca de exemplu caractere ușor de citit sau altă limbă, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Dacă aveți nevoie de un interpret sau de asistență, vă rugăm să ne informați.

Traditional Chinese

如果您需要以其他方式了解信息，如易读或其他语种，请告诉我们。

如果您需要口译人员或帮助，请告诉我们。