

Jordan's story

When I was 20 I woke up one morning with a pounding in my chest, no previous warnings at all. All day it was on and off my heart was going about 240 bpm.

Eventually I decided to go to my local A&E to get looked at; after a few hours they let me go even though I still had a heart beat at 120 bpm, so with concern I took it easy that evening.



The following day I woke up fine until midday, when I nearly collapsed so my dad took me straight to my local hospital where I stayed for two weeks being sent to a larger hospital to be seen by an arrhythmia specialist. At the main hospital they diagnosed SVT but this time I couldn't do anything without it triggering off which was very frightening and not good for your self confidence at all!

To try to cure the SVT I had a catheter ablation which unfortunately wasn't successful and during the procedure they needed more specialist equipment to have a 3D image of my heart while they were ablating. I believe they used an 'ensite array' catheter which was very impressive to watch as you're awake during the ablation - makes it a little more interesting whilst being terrified for six hours!

I stayed in hospital a total of a month, was let out and then a month later went back in for a second ablation, which was successful.

I was off work for nine-ten months in total, and at first I was so scared to even walk down my stairs, and I didn't leave the house for a good three-four months even after my successful operation. When I was in hospital they had to encourage me from my bed, I had many days when I just cried and thought 'why me?' I struggled to even leave a bed because I was so frightened. It was made worse because I was still having the odd miss beat, which is normal after catheter ablations, but still frightened me in case it may come back.

I eventually got my confidence back after ten months (a long hard time), and got back to work and started to feel normal again. But with great disappointment, after two months of being back in work, one afternoon whilst there, my heart went into another arrhythmia which was later diagnosed as AF. This led to me leaving the job and finding a new less stressful job, although I was determined that the AF was not going to beat me anymore. So now it doesn't frighten me but I know it will always be there.

I am currently on medication for AF (*Flecainide* and *Bisoprolol*) which I am slowly being weaned off to see if my heart will now function properly without medication; if not I may have to have a pulmonary vein ablation which, if it has a chance of curing the AF, is something I will definitely be giving a go.

Although this is a very brief summary of my experiences with SVT and AF, please believe me when I say, it is not very nice at all, but it is possible to overcome the mental strain it has on you and learn to live with it, just may take time.