

## Patient Information

# Ventricular Tachycardia

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Abnormal heart rhythms that originate in the bottom chambers of the heart called the ventricles. (Ventricles fill with blood from the top chambers of the heart (atria) and send it to the lungs and through the aorta to be circulated throughout the body.)
- Tachycardia is a resting heart rate of greater than 100 beats per minute. (A normal resting heart rate is 60 to 100 beats per minute.)
- It is a regular, faster-than-normal heart rate that begins in the heart's lower chambers. In most patients with ventricular tachycardia the rate is in the range of 170 beats per minute or more.
- These rhythms can occur as a result of damage to the heart muscle from a heart attack or cardiomyopathy – or in patients with hearts that seem structurally normal.
- Ventricular tachycardia is the most common cause of death in people with cardiomyopathy.

### SYMPTOMS

- Can vary widely
- Some people can be relatively asymptomatic (no symptoms.)
- Some people can feel palpitations.
- Rapid heart rate can lead to lightheadedness from a drop in blood pressure.
- Sustained VT can lead to fainting, loss of consciousness, cardiac arrest or death.

### DIAGNOSTIC TESTS

- EKG (electrocardiogram)
- Holter monitor
- EP (electrophysiology) testing
- Echocardiogram
- Stress Testing
- Angiogram

### TREATMENT

- ICD (Implantable Cardiac Defibrillator)
- Beta-blockers
- Anti-arrhythmic medications
- RFA (radiofrequency ablation)

**FOR MORE INFORMATION** or to make an appointment at URMC Cardiology at Highland Hospital, please call (585) 341-6780 or visit us online at [www.highlandheart.urmc.edu](http://www.highlandheart.urmc.edu)