

## Patient Information

# Atrioventricular Reentrant Tachycardia (AVRT)

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- This is a heart rhythm condition in which the heart rate can become abnormally fast
- This is a type of supraventricular tachycardia (SVT).
- This is related to an abnormal “short circuit” in the electrical connections of the heart between the atria and the ventricles (heart chambers.)
- Episodes of fast heart rates tend to be brief - usually minutes in duration - but can be longer.
- Generally not dangerous (this will not cause a cardiac arrest), although certainly can be associated with very bothersome symptoms.
- Can occur in patients of all ages.
- Not necessarily associated with other heart problems.

### SYMPTOMS

- Palpitations; perception of a fast or forceful heart beat
- Chest discomfort
- Shortness of breath
- Lightheadedness

### DIAGNOSTIC TESTS

- EKG
- Heart rhythm monitor - a Holter or Event monitor
- Electrophysiologic (“EP”) study - an invasive catheter-based procedure where the doctor can “map” out the electrical system of the heart

### TREATMENT

- Vagal maneuvers (bearing down, forceful coughing) can stop episodes of fast heartbeat.
- Medications that slow down the heart rate (beta blockers, calcium channel blockers.)
- Radiofrequency ablation, which is most often curative, involves essentially cauterizing inside the heart at the site of the “short circuit.” Part of an EP study, see above.

**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)