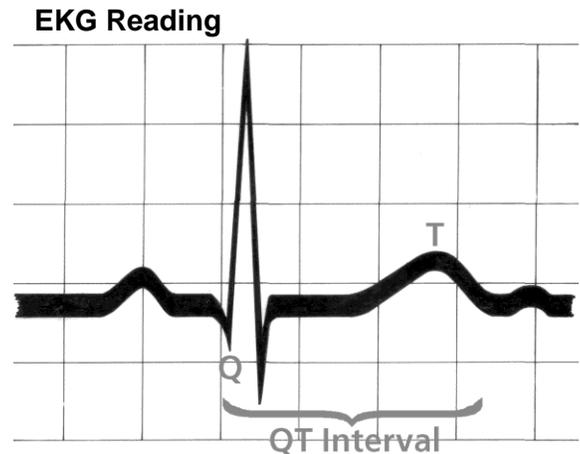


Long QT Syndrome

What is long QT syndrome?

The waveforms on an EKG (electrocardiogram) are named by letters. The time between points Q and T on the EKG are measured to see if the time is normal. The QT interval shows the time it takes for the heart muscle to contract and relax before the next heartbeat begins. If it takes longer than normal, it is called long QT syndrome. The delay can cause an abnormal heart rhythm. This is called an arrhythmia.

Long QT syndrome is a serious problem of the heart's electrical system.



What are the symptoms?

The most common symptoms are:

- Fainting.
- Seizures.

The symptoms occur because an abnormal heart rhythm does not allow blood to be pumped well to the body and brain. **This is an emergency. Call 911 right away.**

Symptoms normally happen:

- During or soon after exercising.
- When emotionally excited, such as being startled.
- During sleep or when woken up suddenly.

Some people never have symptoms. It may be found due to a family history or as part of another test.

What needs to be done?

Your child will need to see a cardiologist. The doctor will order an EKG. An exercise stress test or a Holter monitor may also be needed. Most often, Long QT syndrome runs in families, so the cardiologist will also talk about testing other people in your family. Your child's blood may be tested for abnormal genes.

How is it treated?

- Medicine may be needed to prevent the abnormal heart rhythm.
- Lifestyle changes. This might mean stopping some activities or medicines.
- In high risk patients, surgery may be needed to put in a defibrillator. It can shock someone out of the abnormal heart rhythm.

Some medicines can prolong the QT interval. Your cardiologist will give you a list of medicines to avoid. You can see the complete list at www.azcert.org.

Always tell your child's doctor and pharmacists that your child has long QT syndrome.

ALERT: Call 911 if your child has been diagnosed with long QT syndrome and faints or has a seizure.

Call the doctor, nurse, or clinic if you have any questions or concerns or if your child:

- Is dizzy.
- Has funny heart beats or their heart beating too fast.
- Has special health care needs that were not covered by this information.

This teaching sheet is meant to help you care for your child. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment, and follow-up.