What are the treatment options available?

Most people with mitral valve prolapse will not require any treatment and will just require regular monitoring of their condition.

If you suffer with frequent palpitations then your Healthcare Professional may suggest that you start a tablet called a beta-blocker or calcium channel blocker.

If your mitral valve is severely leaky and you develop symptoms, the heart becomes severely stretched or starts to pump less efficiently you may be referred for heart surgery.

What does heart surgery involve?

A series of tests before you are referred to a surgeon will decide whether you are suitable for either a mitral valve replacement or a mitral valve repair.

During a mitral valve replacement, the existing mitral valve is removed and replaced by either a metal or tissue valve. Your surgeon will discuss which type of valve would be most suitable for you. During a mitral valve repair, the surgeon will modify your existing valve to stop it from leaking.

Both these procedures require a general anaesthetic and the use of a heart-lung bypass machine. You will be left with a scar down the centre of the chest. You will usually spend 1-2 days after the operation in intensive care and are usually discharged from hospital 7-10 days after surgery

Do I need to change my lifestyle?

As with any type of heart disease, it is important that you follow a healthy diet and keep your weight within a normal range. If you smoke, it is advisable that you stop. Your GP can guide you to support available to help you stop smoking. Most patients with mitral valve prolapse will be encouraged to take regular gentle exercise but you should check this with your healthcare professional. If you are planning to get pregnant, you should discuss this with your healthcare professional first and let them know immediately if you become pregnant.

Patients with mitral valve prolapse are also advised to take good care of their teeth and skin to prevent the risk of heart valve infection (endocarditis), which is a rare but serious condition.

Teeth

It is important to take good care of your teeth by brushing your teeth twice a day and visiting your dentist for regular check ups (at least once per year). If you have toothache or an abscess it is important that you get treated for this quickly. Make sure you tell your dentist you have a heart condition.

Skin

Keep your skin clean by washing regularly. Wash any cuts and grazes and keep them clean until they heal and see your GP if your skin becomes red or inflamed. Please speak to your GP/healthcare professional before having any cosmetic procedures (e.g. tattoos, body piercing, fillers etc) that involve breaking the skin.

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NHS
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PATIENT INFORMATION LEAFLET

Mitral Valve Prolapse

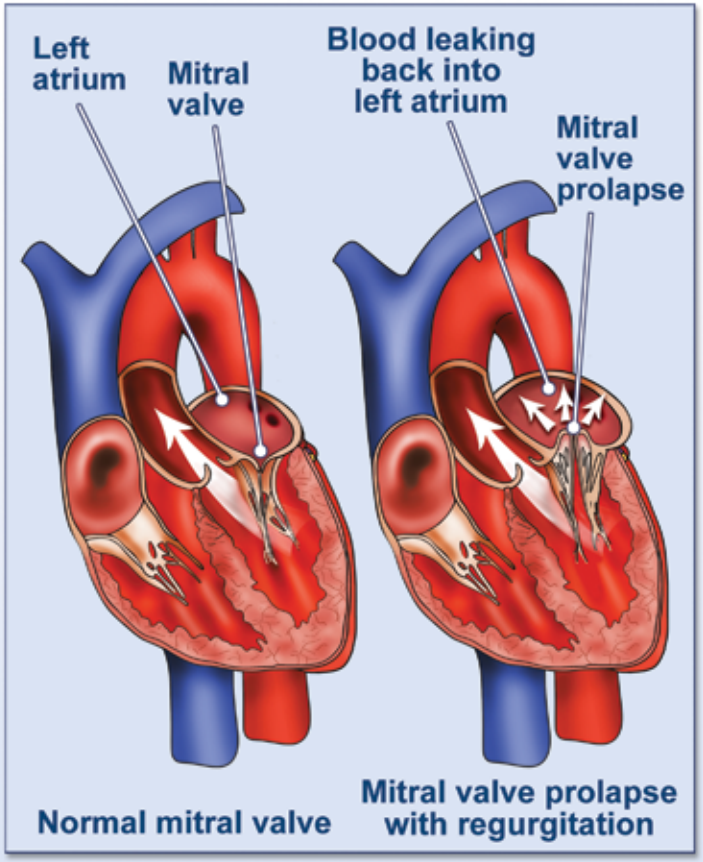
MANCHESTER HEART VALVE TEAM

What is the mitral valve?

The mitral valve is a valve with two leaflets situated on the left hand side of the heart.It is a one way valve that allows blood to move from the left atrium (top chamber of the heart) to the left ventricle (bottom chamber of the heart, the main pump).

What is mitral valve prolapse?

Mitral valve prolapse is a condition where one or two of the leaflets of the mitral valve become floppy and instead of closing properly they billow or bulge into the left atrium (top chamber of the heart). It is sometimes known as Barlow's valve/ syndrome. It is one of the commonest valve abnormalities and affects around 1 in 50 of the population and is more common in females.



Sometimes, as well as the valve flopping back into the top chamber of the heart when the heart muscle pumps, the valve also becomes leaky (known as mitral regurgitation) and blood flows back into the top chamber during heart muscle contraction.

What causes mitral valve prolapse?

Most cases of mitral valve prolapse are simply due to valve degeneration (wear and tear). In a few people, they can be due to conditions which affect joint and cartilage elasticity such as Marfans and Ehlers-Danlos syndrome.

Mitral valve prolapse is diagnosed following an echocardiogram (cardiac ultrasound). Most people who are diagnosed with mitral valve prolapse find out they have the condition by chance, when they have an echocardiogram for other reasons. In some cases, the doctor may have heard a heart murmur or arranged tests due to symptoms such as palpitations.

What are the symptoms of mitral valve prolapse?

Most people with mitral valve prolapse will not experience any symptoms. If the valve has mitral regurgitation (is also leaky), then symptoms such as exertional shortness of breath, swollen ankles and tiredness can occur. Palpitations (a feeling of your heart beating rapidly or erratically) are common in patients with mitral valve prolapse.

If you experience any of the above symptoms you should inform your healthcare professional.

What tests will I need?

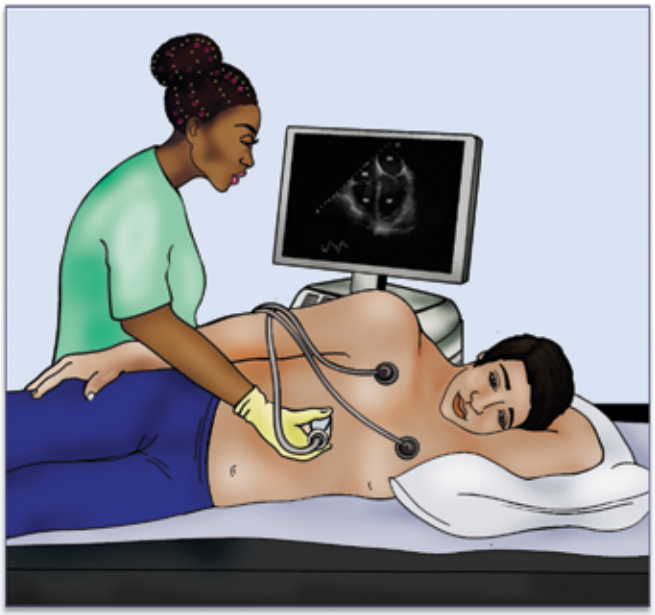
Most people with mitral valve prolapse will have an ECG and echocardiogram. Other tests may also be performed including:

- **Electrocardiogram (ECG)**

Stickers are placed on the chest and the electrical activity of the heart is recorded.

- **Echocardiogram (Echo or cardiac ultrasound)**

During the test an ultrasound probe is placed on the chest and moving pictures of the heart are produced. The test takes around 30 minutes.



- **24 hour ECG / Heart Monitor**

Three stickers are placed on the chest attached to a battery pack. You take this device home and wear it for 24 hours to monitor your heart over a prolonged period.