

## INVASIVE CARDIOLOGY PROCEDURES

### • ELECTROPHYSIOLOGY STUDIES AND ARRHYTHMIA ABLATIONS

An electrophysiology (EP) study is an invasive procedure allowing detailed testing of the electrical system of the heart. Catheters are placed via veins in the leg into the heart. The test helps to determine the causes of dizziness, fainting or loss of consciousness, palpitations and rapid or slow heart beats. It can also evaluate the risk of sudden cardiac death in high risk patients with heart disease. If an abnormal heart rhythm or source of palpitations is identified, it may be permanently cured by ablation (electrical cautery) during the procedure.

### • PERMANENT PACEMAKER INSERTION

If a patient has a slow heart rate, that is causing problems of low blood pressure or even loss of consciousness, there may be a problem with the electrical conduction system of the heart. This may be treatable by insertion of a pacemaker. A small incision is made in the chest and the device is placed under the skin. This is then attached to lead(s) that are passed through a vein and positioned in the heart.

### • AUTOMATIC IMPLANTABLE CARDIAC DEFIBRILLATORS: (AICDS)

AICDS are devices used to prevent sudden cardiac death in high risk patients. They are implanted by a cardiac electrophysiologist, often after an EP study. The AICD is similar to a pacemaker except larger in size and can deliver electrical shocks to the heart, if needed to stabilize the heart rhythm.

### • CLOSURE OF CARDIAC DEFECTS

Instead of closing at birth, abnormal holes between the walls of the chambers in the heart may occasionally persist into adulthood (e.g. patent foramen ovale, atrial septal defect). These abnormal connections may be associated with conditions causing symptoms including disturbance of heart rhythm, heart failure, strokes and possibly even migraine headaches. These holes can be identified by echocardiograms. Technology has been developed to close these defects without the need for major surgery and these procedures can be performed at the Galway Clinic. These devices are passed to the heart via veins in the leg, placed over the defect in the heart and patients may go home the next day. Alternatively, if the heart anatomy is not suitable for this approach, an open-heart procedure can be performed instead, also available here at the Galway Clinic.

### • ACUTE CHEST PAIN UNIT

The Galway Clinic has recently opened an acute chest pain assessment unit. This accepts urgent referrals from general practitioners for assessment of cardiac-sounding chest pain in a rapid-track fashion. The Chest pain assessment nurse and a cardiologist review all patients and organize suitable investigations (troponin, exercise test etc). High-risk patients are admitted for further assessment as required.



The Galway Clinic is located on the N6 Dual Carriageway off the Martin Roundabout

To arrange an appointment please telephone the main diagnostic imaging reception at **091-785602** or fax **091-785612**

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## CARDIOLOGY & CARDIAC CATHETERISATION



