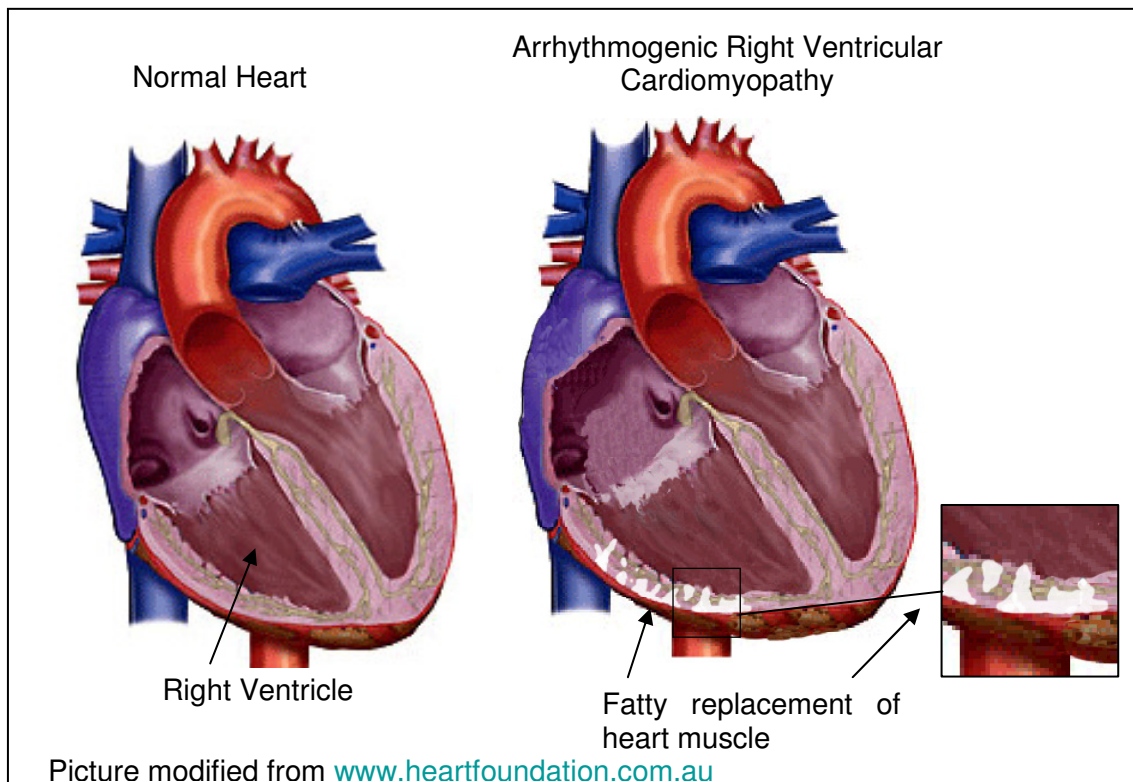


Arrhythmogenic Right Ventricular Cardiomyopathy (ARVC)

Arrhythmogenic right ventricular cardiomyopathy is a disease of the heart muscle, where the normal heart muscle cells on the right-hand side of the heart are replaced by fat and scar tissue. These changes in the heart muscle can cause two main problems. First, it can cause changes in the electrical system of the heart leading to heart rhythm abnormalities. Second, the right side of the heart can become enlarged and not pump as it should, leading to heart failure. These changes in the heart can lead to a range of symptoms, i.e. some patients may have no symptoms while others may develop palpitations, chest pain, dizziness and fainting episodes. In the most serious instances, it can lead to heart failure or sudden cardiac death, especially in young athletes.



How it is inherited

Arrhythmogenic right ventricular cardiomyopathy is inherited as an autosomal dominant disease (see section on Genetics Inheritance for more information).

Genetic testing

Major advancements have been made in genetic testing for arrhythmogenic right ventricular cardiomyopathy in recent years. Genetic testing is now commercially available and involves screening five common genes. In approximately 40-50% of families, the gene alteration will be identified. Further research is needed to identify more genes involved in this disease.

Treatment

No specific treatments are available, but there is evidence that the disease is made worse by vigorous sporting activity, particularly competitive cycling, so these should be avoided. Those at highest risk benefit from a pacemaker-defibrillator ("ICD"- intracardiac defibrillator).

For more information see the "Contact" information sheet.