

Diagnosed with SCAD?

Spontaneous Coronary Artery Dissection

If you have been diagnosed with SCAD, this leaflet will help answer many of your questions about treatment, medication, support and more.

Why me?

If you've been diagnosed with SCAD you may feel isolated, scared and confused. You are likely to have many questions about SCAD, starting with 'why has this happened to me?' Other questions will include treatments, medication, exercise, cardiac rehab, psychological issues and more.

Beat SCAD is here to help! Some questions cannot be answered yet, which is why current research is so important, but Beat SCAD aims to provide you with the current information and essential support.

What causes SCAD?

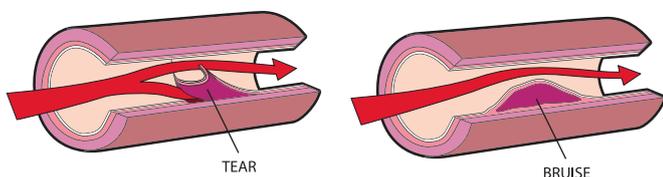
Spontaneous Coronary Artery Dissection (SCAD) is a rare heart condition that cannot be predicted or prevented – yet.

A tear or a bruise develops in a coronary artery resulting in a blockage that prevents normal blood flow and can cause heart attack, heart failure or cardiac arrest.

SCAD affects fit, healthy people, mainly women, with few or none of the normal cardiac risk factors.

You can find information about SCAD on the Beat SCAD and Leicester Cardiovascular Biomedical Research Centre's websites (see further information). Also on the Beat SCAD website are videos from our events, where researchers from the UK research project, provide some insights into SCAD.

We currently don't know what causes SCAD, although a few theories are emerging – see the European Society of Cardiology SCAD Position Paper (bit.ly/2FkRkMj).



SCAD survivors at one of Beat SCAD's Conferences

Treatment for SCAD

Depending on the severity of the SCAD event and heart damage, treatments and medication can vary but may include:

- ❑ Conservative management with medication such as aspirin, statins, blood pressure pills and beta blockers. This is the preferred treatment where possible.
- ❑ Surgical intervention, such as inserting stents, or coronary artery bypass surgery.

There is a lack of evidence about how appropriate medication normally prescribed to heart patients is for SCAD patients. Patients are all different and medications need to be tailored to individuals.

Exercise & cardiac rehab

Returning to normal physical activities is an important part of the physical and psychological recovery from a SCAD event. Cardiac rehabilitation, as part of a programme appropriately adapted to the age and fitness of SCAD survivors, is therefore highly recommended.

Beat SCAD believes cardiac rehab sessions are invaluable as they help you to return to exercise and understand how far you can push your body in a safe, supportive environment.

Getting support

As a rare disease patient you may find you know more about your condition than the medical professionals treating you, so it's important to find the best support.

Peer support

Talking to other SCAD patients can help reduce the feelings of isolation, provide support with practical matters as well as suggestions for how to deal with your feelings and emotions. Beat SCAD's events also provide opportunities to meet other patients.

Professional support

SCAD patients can suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, depression or other mental health issues. It's important to seek professional help early from your GP or cardiologist.

Beat SCAD

Beat SCAD was created by SCAD survivors who met on social media while trying to find support and information about SCAD. They helped initiate the UK research and Beat SCAD works closely with the research team.

Beat SCAD's vision is a world that understands SCAD, where those affected are quickly and accurately diagnosed and never feel alone.

Beat SCAD's mission is to:

- ❑ raise awareness of SCAD among medics, as well as SCAD patients, their family and friends
- ❑ provide support for SCAD patients, family and friends
- ❑ raise funds for research into SCAD

Beat SCAD believes it's important that first responders, paramedics, midwives, cardiac rehab nurses, GPs, cardiologists and other medical professionals are aware of SCAD diagnosis and treatment, so fit, healthy people with cardiac symptoms receive the best treatment without delay.



SCAD research

A UK research project, led by Dr David Adlam at the Leicester Cardiovascular Biomedical Centre, is trying to find answers to what causes SCAD. This project was initiated by SCAD patients.

SCAD clinics

Dr Adlam holds NHS SCAD clinics at Glenfield Hospital, Leicester (scad.lcbru.le.ac.uk/node/53) and Dr Abtehale Al-Hussaini has clinics at London's Chelsea and Westminster Hospital. Both are happy for SCAD patients to be referred to them by GPs and cardiologists. For more, see beatscad.org.uk/scad-nhs-clinic-referrals.

Further information

Beat SCAD

beatscad.org.uk
contactus@beatscad.org.uk
facebook.com/beatscaduk
Youtube: bit.ly/1TXhiLV

UK SCAD research project at the Leicester Biomedical Research Centre
scad.lcbru.le.ac.uk

Facebook groups

SCAD – UK & Ireland Survivors
For SCAD patients bit.ly/1Mizg9a

SCAD Family and Friends Support Group
bit.ly/1TMQDwc

British Heart Foundation

bit.ly/1LaOgys

Fibromuscular Dysplasia Society of America

Information about FMD fmdsa.org

Other leaflets in this series:

- ❑ What is SCAD?
- ❑ SCAD for health professionals
- ❑ Pregnancy-related SCAD case studies
- ❑ Helping children understand SCAD

Download pdfs from beatscad.org.uk/useful-documents or email contactus@beatscad.org.uk for printed leaflets.