

# Information about Syncope



## **Why was I given this leaflet?**

This leaflet has been written to give you information on syncope. The information in this letter does not replace the information given to you by the doctor or nurse but we hope you will find it a helpful guide.

## **What is syncope?**

Syncope (sin-co-pee) is a medical term for a blackout that is caused by a sudden lack of blood supply to the brain. Syncope does not usually last very long, and an individual will regain consciousness within a few seconds (although it may feel like much longer).

## **What causes syncope?**

There are a number of different causes of syncope. The most common is called vasovagal syncope which is also known as a faint. This can occur for many reasons such as being dehydrated, being too warm, standing for a long time or experiencing strong emotions. These episodes may not need further investigation unless they're not settling.

If it is not clear why someone has had a simple faint then they may need further investigations. The A&E team or your own GP may organise these.

## **What tests may I get to investigate my syncope?**

Some people may not need any tests or investigations. However, you may have some of the following tests:

- Checking your blood pressure while lying and standing
- Blood tests
- ECG (electrocardiogram) - this is a recording of the electrical activity in your heart

## What symptoms might I experience leading up to syncope?

- Dizziness or light-headedness
- Cold skin, sweating or flushing
- Feeling sick
- Changes to your vision
- Slurred speech

## Teaching, training, and research

NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde is committed to teaching, training, and research to support the development of health and healthcare in our community. Healthcare students may observe consultations for this purpose. Please tell us if you do not want students to observe.

We may also ask you if you would like to be involved in our research. We are currently running a study to investigate patients who have a collapse or syncope. We may contact you by telephone to discuss whether you would be interested in taking part.

If you do not wish to be contacted, please tell the hospital doctor or nurse, or contact us on ☎ 0141 452 2054 (QEIH) ☎ 0141 314 6654 (RAH).

