

References

St Leger Dowse M, Waterman MK, Penny CEL, Smerdon GR. Does self-certification reflect the cardiac health of UK sport divers? *Diving and Hyperbaric Medicine*. 2015 September;45(3):184-189.

St Leger Dowse M, Cridge C, Smerdon G The use of drugs by UK recreational divers: prescribed and over the counter medications. *Diving and Hyperbaric Medicine* 2011;41(1):16-21.

St Leger Dowse M, Cridge C, Shaw S, Smerdon G. Alcohol and UK recreational divers: consumption and attitudes. *Diving and Hyperbaric Medicine*. 2012;42:201-7.

The British Heart Foundation
www.bhf.org.uk

NHS Choices
www.nhs.uk

Office of National Statistics
www.ons.gov.uk

is your
heart
fit to dive?

**OR ARE YOU DIVING INTO
THE HEART OF TROUBLE?**

This leaflet has been produced by DDRC Healthcare, a charity (no 279652) that promotes medical treatment, education & training and research associated with the use of hyperbaric oxygen therapy in the treatment of divers and non-divers.

Find out more about DDRC Healthcare
at www.ddrc.org;
Facebook & Twitter – @DDRCplymouth

Did you know?

Cardiovascular disease causes more than a quarter of all deaths in the UK each year

An estimated 7 million people live with cardiovascular disease in the UK

It costs an estimated £19 billion each year in premature death, lost productivity, hospital treatment and prescriptions

Coronary heart disease is the UK's single biggest killer in the over 50s age group

Nearly one in six men and one in ten women die from coronary heart disease

It is responsible for around 70,000 deaths in the UK each year, an average of 190 people each day, or one every eight minutes

Around 23,000 people aged less than 75 in the UK die from coronary heart disease each year

Most deaths from coronary heart disease are caused by a heart attack

There are up to 175,000 heart attacks in the UK each year; one every three minutes

Over 1 million people in the UK have been diagnosed with atrial fibrillation (AF) which can be associated with coronary heart disease and stroke

It is estimated that there are hundreds of thousands more living with undiagnosed AF

As divers continue through their diving career, some inevitably develop health problems but keep on diving.

Annual BSAC incident data show the older age group (over 50s) are increasingly represented in the mortality data.

Recent DDRC Healthcare research in 2007 and 2010 show 9% and 10% of the divers studied were taking cardiac medications for primary or secondary disease prevention.

don't be a statistic

DDRC Healthcare research from 672 sport divers found that overall:

66% were overweight or obese

34% had two or more health risk factors – smoking, overweight, lack of exercise, and excess alcohol

33% only exercised once a week or less

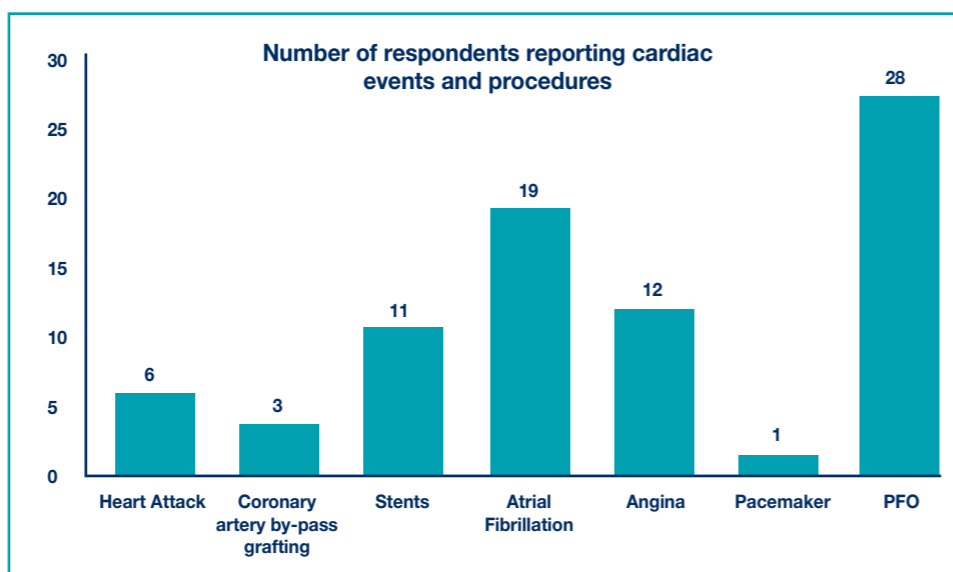
22% had a family history of cardiac problems

18% had physician diagnosed high blood pressure with one third having a medical >10 years old, or none at all

10% reported a range of cardiovascular issues, events, and procedures

9% were taking cardiac medications

7% smoked cigarettes



Atrial Fibrillation - 5 had no medical for > 10 years or no diving medical at all and 7 also suffered from high blood pressure

Coronary Artery By-pass Grafting - Quintuple, quadruple, and triple by-pass were all reported; one diver had sought fit-to-dive advice from an "outside area"

Do you?

Take enough exercise - 30 minutes of activity on five days a week

Eat healthily – five portions of fruit and vegetables a day

Eat enough fibre – aim for 30g per day

Eat enough fish – twice a week including a portion of oily fish

Watch your weight – being overweight increases the risk of heart disease

Watch your alcohol intake – five pints of lager a week = 44,200 calories over a year

Have you?

Quit smoking – it is one of the main causes of heart diseases

Thought about having your blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugars checked

Told your GP if you have a family history of cardiac problems

Sought advice from a diving doctor about your cardiac health

Thought about a diving medical recently if you are over 50

32% Technical Divers and of that group:

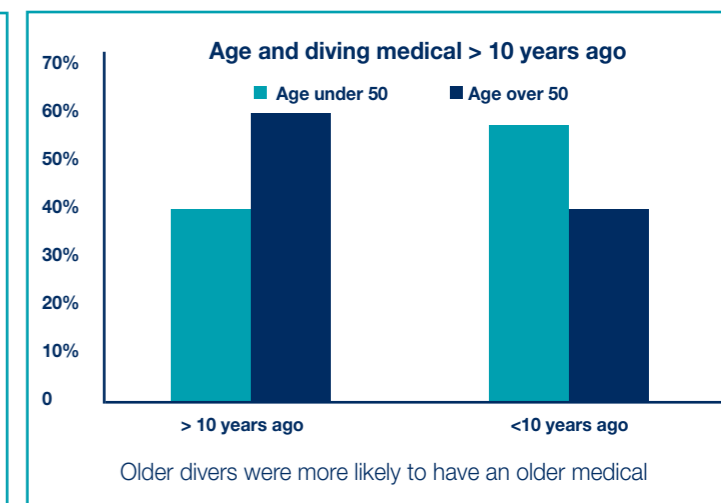
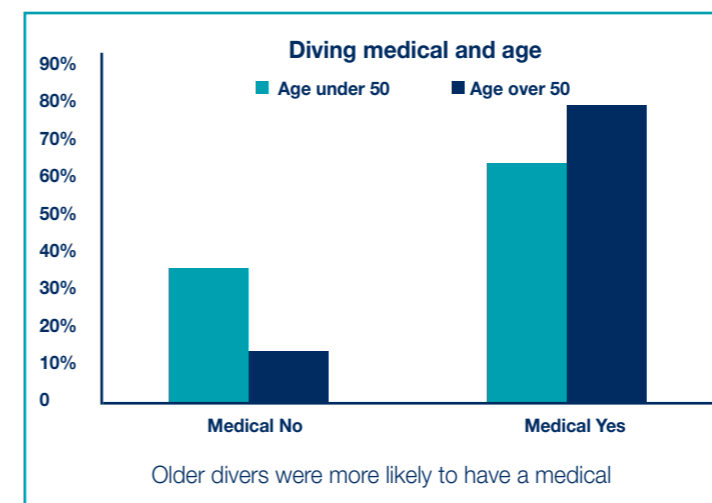
36% had a medical > 10 years old or none at all

16% had physician diagnosed high blood pressure

5% were taking cardiac medications

Technical divers also reported PFOs, angina, coronary stents, heart attack, atrial fibrillation, and coronary by-pass surgery

Diving Medicals



Not all GPs and cardiac consultants may understand the potential interaction of a medical condition and the diving environment

Not all divers seek advice from a diving physician when appropriate to their health status

Considerable numbers of divers have cardiac issues, but may not undergo a diving medical

Some divers have a state of cardiac health that may put themselves and/or other divers at risk

Are you being a responsible diver, seeking the appropriate advice, and facing up to your health issues?

Do you know how healthy your diving buddy is?