

# Faulty valves

Not all people are lucky enough to go through life with healthy hearts. Unsynchronised beating is not all that can go wrong with your heart.

Faulty valves can cause symptoms such as:

- chest pain
- shortness of breath
- inability to sleep
- fatigue and an inability to carry out daily activities
- swollen ankles
- abnormally large abdomen.

There are two problems that can occur with heart valves.

- **Steniosis** where the valve opening becomes narrow.
- **Insufficiency or regurgitation** where the valve does not close completely.

## Steniosis

Heart valves can become **calcified**. This means they can become coated in layers of calcium salts. This can be likened to coating your one-way door with layer upon layer of paint each month of your life. The result is a narrowing of the valve opening.

When the valve opening is smaller, less blood can pass through the opening at any one time. This decreases the heart's efficiency and less blood is being pumped to the body.