

Home Remedies: Techniques to Try When Palpitations Strike

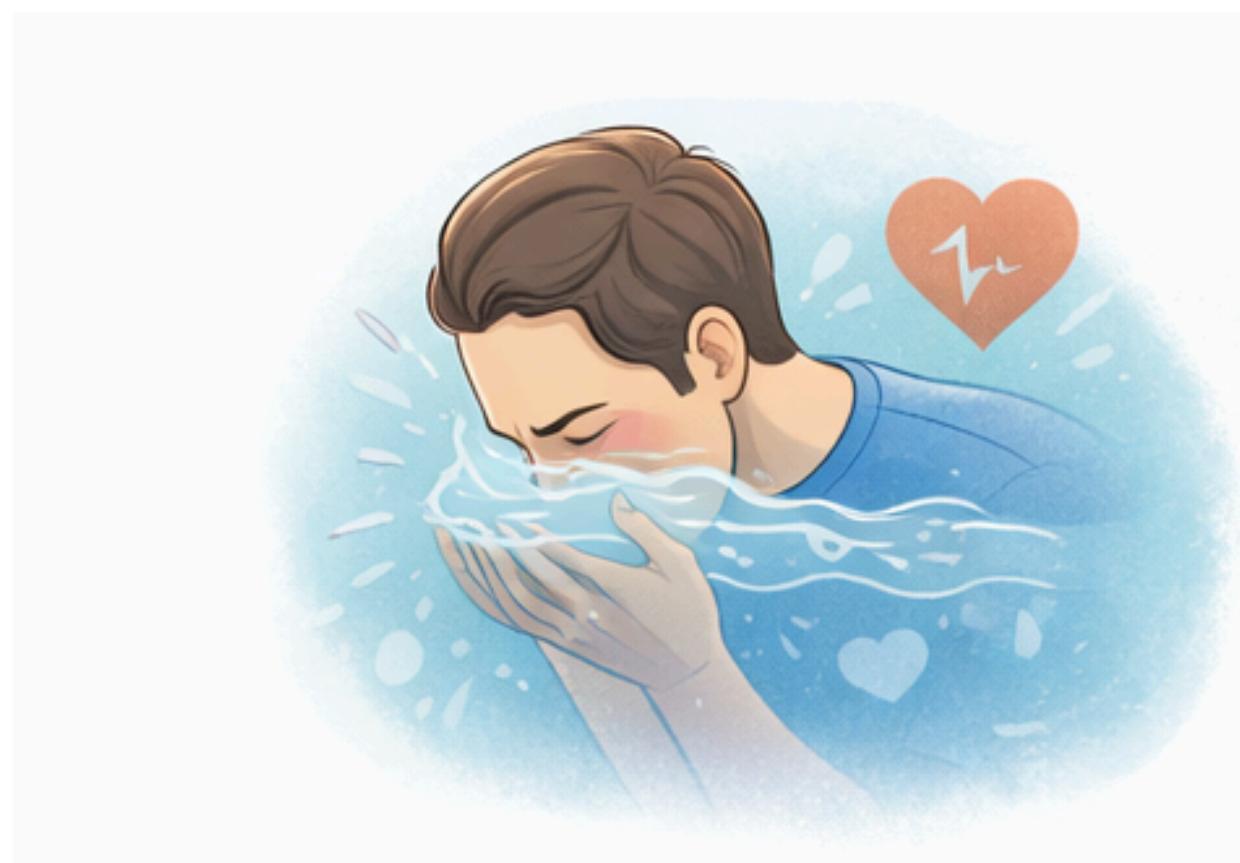
When you feel that flutter or race, there are immediate techniques you can try to calm things down:

Vagal Maneuvers: These stimulate the vagus nerve, which can slow your heart rate. They're particularly effective for SVT:



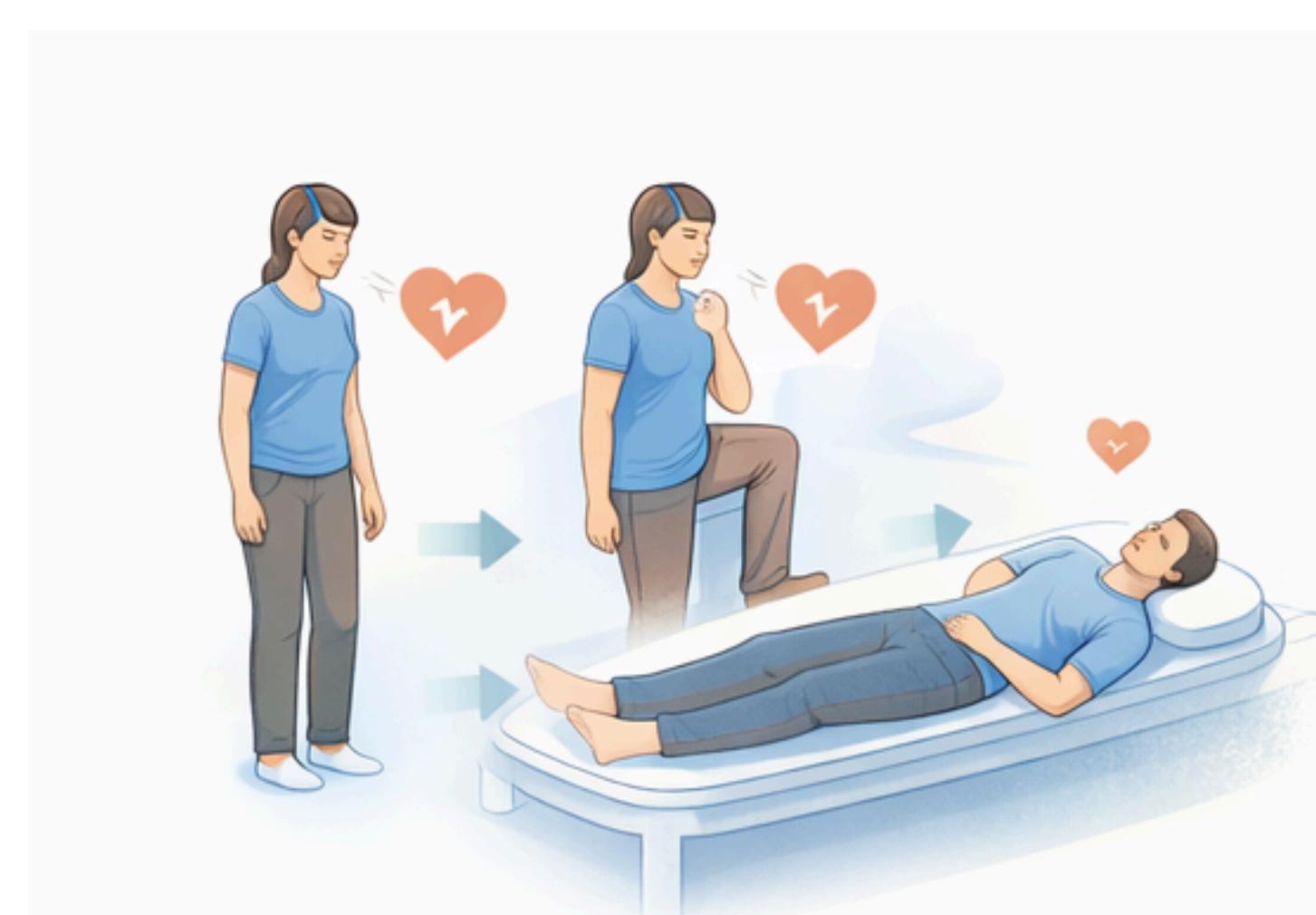
The Valsalva maneuver: Pinch your nose closed, close your mouth, and try to breathe out forcefully, like you're trying to pop your ears during a flight. Hold for 10-15 seconds

Bearing down: Like you're having a bowel movement (without actually being on the toilet). This creates similar pressure changes.



Coughing forcefully: Several strong coughs in succession.

Cold water immersion: Splash very cold water on your face, or even better, dunk your face in a bowl of ice water for a few seconds (if you can tolerate it). This triggers the "diving reflex," which slows the heart.



Change Position: If palpitations start when you're standing, sit or lie down. If you're lying down, sit up. Sometimes a positional change is all it takes.



Deep, Slow Breathing: Sit or lie down. Breathe in slowly through your nose for 4-5 counts, hold briefly, then exhale slowly through your mouth for 6-7 counts. Do this for 5 minutes. Slow, controlled breathing activates your parasympathetic nervous system, the "rest and digest" mode that naturally calms your heart.

Stay Calm: Easier said than done, but panicking about palpitations makes them worse by releasing more adrenaline. Remind yourself: "This is uncomfortable but not dangerous. It will pass."