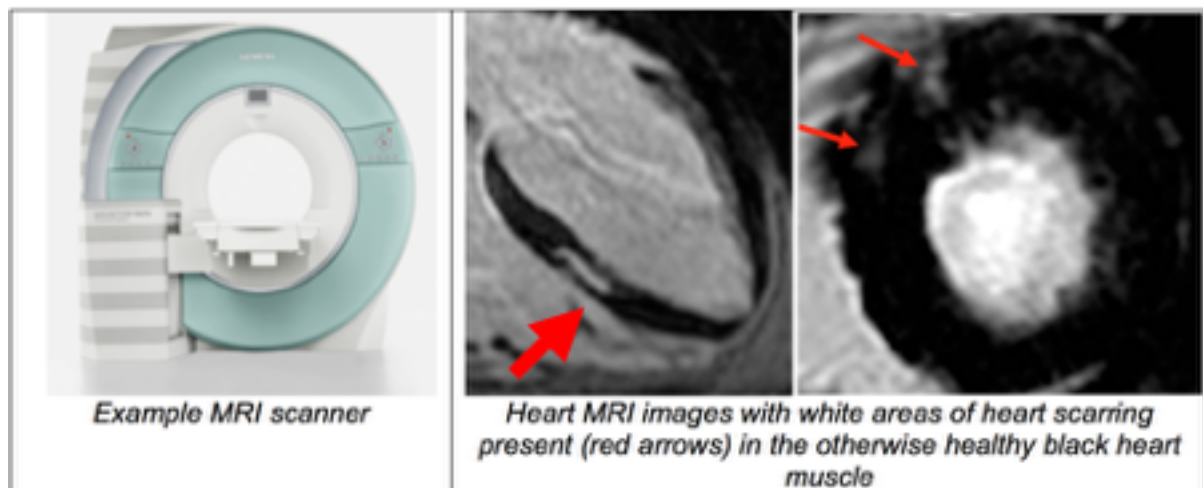




The EVOLVED study

Aortic valve narrowing (stenosis) is the most common valve disease requiring surgery in the UK. Currently, cardiologists wait until patients develop symptoms (breathlessness, chest pain or dizziness/collapse) before recommending valve replacement surgery, on the basis that symptoms suggest the heart is struggling to cope with the narrowed valve. It can however be tricky to assess patient symptoms especially in patients with lots of other medical conditions and those with limited mobility. In Edinburgh, we are therefore looking at other more objective ways we can detect a heart that is starting to fail. The most promising of these is a magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) technique that can directly visualise scarring of the heart muscle.



Scarring appears to be an earlier sign of a struggling heart that develops before symptoms and we think that operating at that earlier stage might lead to less heart damage and better patient outcomes in the long term. We are therefore performing a major clinical trial called EVOLVED investigating whether operating early in patients with severe aortic stenosis and scarring of the heart muscle improves their long term outcomes compared to the current approach of waiting for symptoms to develop. This study is now recruiting at centres across the United Kingdom. Once recruited participants will be randomly allocated to either routine clinical care (operate when symptoms develop) or an early heart valve operation. We will follow-up our patients for 3-4 years and see whether on average an early operation leads to living longer and having fewer symptoms.

We are looking for further sites and recruitment has already begun. For more information please contact the trial manager on evolved.trial@ed.ac.uk or the Chief Investigator Dr Marc Dweck marc.dweck@ed.ac.uk.