

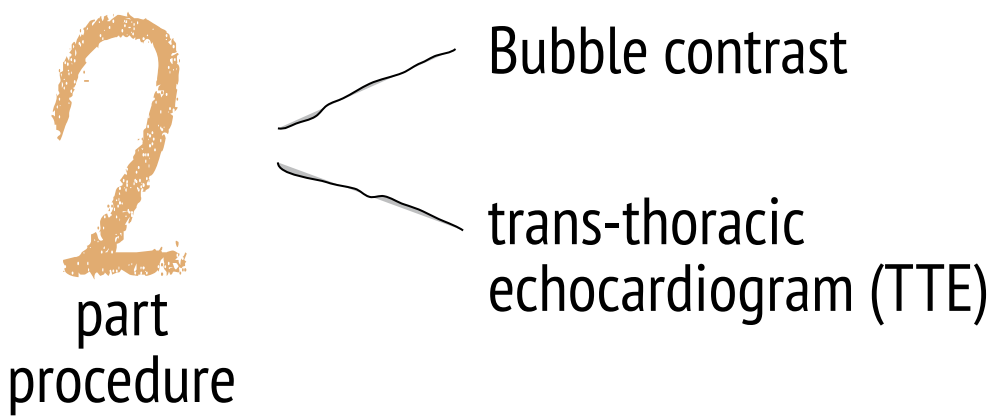
PFO and fitness

The foramen ovale is the opening in the wall that separates the left and right atrium of the fetal heart. When humans are born this hole closes. If it does not close, it is known as a patent foramen ovale (PFO).

Factors for PFO-related DCI

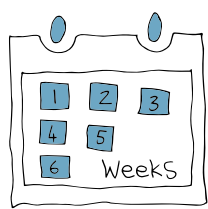
- The bigger the PFO, the greater the risk of DCS
- Venous gas emboli must form
- Bubble/s must cross the PFO to arterial circulation
- The bubbles must reach a target tissue while it is still supersaturated and vulnerable

Testing and evaluation



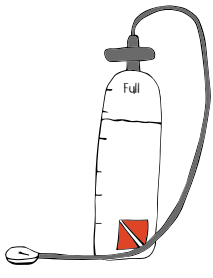
What a PFO means for divers

Your personal restrictions will be discussed between you and your diving doctor but can include:



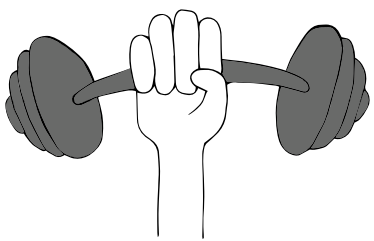
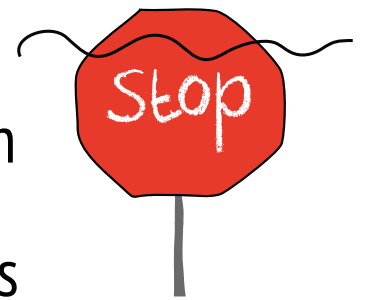
Reducing dive times

Diving only once per day

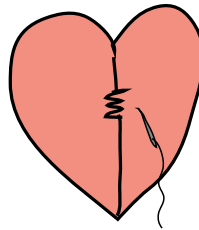


Use of nitrox

Increasing decompression stop times at shallow depths



Avoiding heavy exercise and heavy lifting at least three hours after diving



Closing the PFO



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