



What is Atrial Fibrillation?

Patient Information

Johnson & Johnson
MedTech

Get Smart
About **AFib**

Atrial Fibrillation

What is Atrial Fibrillation?

Atrial fibrillation is a heart rhythm disorder in which the upper chambers (atria) of the heart contract too fast and irregularly when abnormal electrical impulses suddenly start firing in the atria. This reduces the heart's efficiency and performance.

Atrial fibrillation is the most common heart rhythm disturbance and can affect people of any age, but it is more common with age and maybe related to other medical conditions. More men than women have atrial fibrillation.



Types of Atrial Fibrillation

The type is determined by how frequent the episodes of atrial fibrillation are and how long they last:

PAROXYSMAL ATRIAL FIBRILLATION

Paroxysmal atrial fibrillation is a continuous AF episode that lasts longer than 30 seconds, but stops spontaneously or with intervention within 7 days of onset.¹

PERSISTENT ATRIAL FIBRILLATION

Continuous atrial fibrillation that is sustained beyond 7 days, but less than 1 year.¹

LONG STANDING PERSISTENT ATRIAL FIBRILLATION

Continuous Atrial Fibrillation for more than 12 months and that rhythm is being treated.¹

1. Tzeis S, Gerstenfeld EP, Kalman J, et al. 2024 European Heart Rhythm Association/Heart Rhythm Society/Asia Pacific Heart Rhythm Society/Latin American Heart Rhythm Society expert consensus statement on catheter and surgical ablation of atrial fibrillation. *Europace*. 2024;26(4):euae043.

Atrial Fibrillation

What causes Atrial Fibrillation?

Atrial fibrillation is most often caused by changes in the heart, that can be related to life style, chronic diseases, age or other risk factors. Atrial fibrillation is more likely to occur in people with conditions such as high blood pressure, obesity, sleep apnoea syndrome (stopping breathing during sleeping) and narrowing of the coronary arteries. It can be triggered in certain situations such as drinking too much alcohol or smoking.

Your doctor may conduct other exams such as echo or CT scan of your heart, a sleep study and blood tests to help detect causes of your arrhythmia.



What are the symptoms?

The symptoms of atrial fibrillation vary greatly and most often consist of a noticeably irregular, fast pulse and heart palpitations. Moreover, fatigue, dizziness or shortness of breath may also occur, as the heart pumps slightly less efficiently than with a regular and easy rhythm. Feeling anxious or depressed can also occur when you experience disruptions in your quality of life. However, there are also some people in which atrial fibrillation goes unnoticed but that can still be at risk of complications and in need of treatment.

What is the treatment?

The integrated management of atrial fibrillation patients can include:

- A** Reduce risk of stroke using treatments like blood thinning medication
- B** Symptom control treatments like Rate or rhythm medication, cardioversion and catheter ablation.
- C** Cardiac risk factors reduction through lifestyle changes and other treatments.

Patient Information:

1. What is an arrhythmia?
- 2. What is Atrial Fibrillation?**
3. Preparing for my first arrhythmia consultation
4. Atrial fibrillation treatment options for rhythm control
5. What is an ablation procedure?
6. My hospital stay for an ablation procedure
7. My recovery after an ablation procedure

For more PATIENT RESOURCES related
to Atrial Fibrillation, please visit

getsmartaboutafib.eu



As with any medical treatment, individual results may vary. Only a Cardiologist or Electrophysiologist can determine whether ablation is an appropriate course of treatment. There are potential risks including bleeding, swelling or bruising at the catheter insertion site, and infection. More serious complications are rare, which can include damage to the heart or blood vessels; blood clots (which may lead to stroke); heart attack, or death. These risks need to be discussed with your doctor and recovery takes time.

The information featured here is not intended as medical advice, or to be used for medical diagnosis or treatment. Please talk to your doctor if you have any questions.

This document is published by Johnson & Johnson Medical NV/SA.

This publication is not intended for distribution outside of the EMEA region.

©Johnson & Johnson Medical and its affiliates 2025. All rights reserved. EM_BWI_NAVI_136118.1