

ATRIAL FIBRILLATION

IRREGULAR HEARTBEAT

What is atrial fibrillation (or AFib)?

You've been diagnosed with **atrial fibrillation** (*AY-tree-al fi-bri-LA-shun*), also known as AFib. AFib is a type of irregular heartbeat. Heart valve problems sometimes cause AFib, but most cases of AFib are not caused by heart valve problems. Either way, AFib can make you more likely to have a stroke.



What symptoms are common in AFib?

With AFib, you may feel:

- Your heart racing, fluttering, or pounding
- Chest pain
- Shortness of breath
- Dizziness or fainting
- Tired or weak
- Confused

Sometimes, AFib occurs without any symptoms.

How did I get AFib?

Your risk of having AFib increases as you get older. Being overweight, having heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, and lung disease all increase your risk of having AFib.

In some people, the cause of AFib may be unknown.



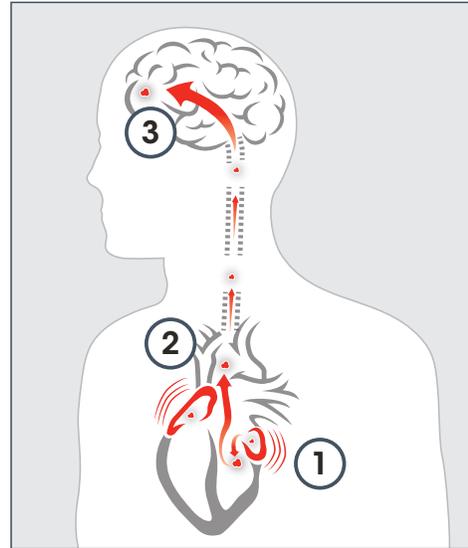
In AFib, the upper chambers of the heart—called the atria—don't beat the way they should.

How can AFib cause a stroke?

In AFib, an irregular heartbeat can cause blood to pool in your heart, forming a blood clot:

- ① The clot in your heart could break away
- ② The bloodstream can carry it to your brain
- ③ In the brain, the clot can block blood flow, causing a stroke, which is called an **ischemic** (*is-KEE-mic*) stroke
 - The other kind of stroke is called **hemorrhagic** (*hem-ah-RAJ-iK*), which is caused by bleeding in the brain and is far less common in patients with AFib

Having AFib can put you at nearly 5 times greater risk of a stroke than someone without AFib.



What are my treatment options?

One goal of treatment is to help your heart beat normally again. Your doctor may prescribe medicines or recommend a surgical procedure to treat your AFib.

Your doctor may also prescribe a blood-thinning medicine to help stop clots from forming as a result of your AFib.

Your doctor will determine which treatment option is right for you.

This health information is provided for educational purposes only and is not intended to replace your discussions with a healthcare professional. All decisions regarding patient care must be made with a healthcare professional, who can consider the unique aspects of the patient.