Atrial fibrillation: Listen to Your Heartbeat

The most common abnormal heart rhythm



of British population affected

Atrial fibrillation (AF) affects almost 2% of the British population and the number of cases could double within the next 50 years¹

Atrial fibrillation in the heart

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The atria are affected by abnormal electrical impulses which cause the heart to beat irregularly 1

The blood pools in the heart and **can clot which could lead to a stroke**

What are the risk factors?

On average, a diagnosis of AF is only reached **2.6 years after** symptoms appear⁴

AF affects nearly twice as many men as women

Risk increases with age⁶:

▲ 10% +65

15%

+65 years old

+75 years old

Symptoms

greater risk

of suffering

a stroke

High blood pressure Heart disease Chronic thyroid or lung illnesses



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Check your blood pressure Go to the doctor if your pulse is consistently above 100bpm or below 60bpm Moderate your alcohol intake Stop smoking With each cigarette, the blood pressure rises **Exercise** and **control your weight** An **active lifestyle** helps keep your arteries clear

1. Barham, L. Atrial Fibrillation in Europe: How AWARE are you?, November 2010. 2. NHS Improvement, Heart and Stroke Improvement, Atrial fibrillation in primary care: Making an impact on stroke prevention, National priority project final summaries, October 2009. 3. Schneck M, Lei X. Cardioembolic stroke. eMedicine Neurology, 2008. 4. Aliot E, et al., An international survey of physician and patient understanding, perception, and attitudes to atrial fibrillation and its contribution to cardiovascular disease morbidity and mortality, Europace, 12:626-633, 2010. 5. NICE costing report: Atrial fibrillation, Implementing the NICE guideline on atrial fibrillation (CG180), June 2014. 6. AF Association, What is atrial fibrillation? Available at: www.atrialfibrillation.org.uk/patient-information/atrial-fibrillation.html. Last accessed: April 2016. Illustrations by Oriol Alegret. © 2016 People Who Global. Visit us and sign up at www.peoplewho.co.uk/atrialfibrillation