

Doctor discussion guide: atrial fibrillation

Atrial fibrillation (also known as AF or AFib) is the most common type of arrhythmia (irregular heartbeat or heart rhythm). The most common symptom of AF is heart palpitations (an irregular and rapid heartbeat, typically experienced as a rapid thumping in the chest).

If not properly managed or treated, atrial fibrillation can have serious complications. Atrial fibrillation increases your risk for stroke, heart failure, and being hospitalized.

There are many ways to effectively manage atrial fibrillation. Your doctor can discuss atrial fibrillation with you and address any concerns you may have. If you have questions about atrial fibrillation, have been recently diagnosed, or are not sure how your treatment is progressing, talking to your doctor can help you better manage your condition so you can improve your quality of life.

Do you ever feel rushed at the doctor's office? Not sure what questions to ask? **Use the Doctor Discussion Guide to help you prepare for talking with your doctor.** To get started, print the Doctor Discussion Guide, fill it out as best you can, and bring it to your doctor's appointment.

Reason for my visit:

1. Select the statement(s) that best describe(s) the reason for your visit:

(choose all that apply).

- I would like to know if I have atrial fibrillation or if I am at risk for it.
- I've been diagnosed with AFib and I think I'm experiencing symptoms even though I'm on medication(s) for it.
- I'm having trouble remembering to take my AFib medication(s).
- I've been experiencing unpleasant side effects from my AFib medication(s).
- I'm not sure how to take my AFib medication(s).
- I don't think my current AFib medication(s) is working.
- I'm scheduled for a routine check-up to see how I'm doing with my AFib treatment.
- other:

My medical history:

2. I have been diagnosed with atrial fibrillation (If no, skip to question 5)

- Yes
- No

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3. I have tried or am on the following medications for my AFib:

(if you're not sure which of your medications are for AFib, simply list all of your medications)

4. Medical procedures/devices I have received: (check all that apply)

- electrical cardioversion
- catheter ablation
- surgery
- I have received a medical procedure/device but am not sure what it was called
- other:

5. I have the following symptoms: (check all that apply)

- I do not feel any symptoms
- heart palpitations (feels like my heart is pounding, fluttering, or beating too hard or fast)
- irregular and rapid heartbeat
- chest pain, discomfort, or tightness
- dizziness, lightheadedness, or fainting
- fatigue
- shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, especially with exertion or anxiety sweating
- nausea
- become easily tired after exercising or being active
- weakness
- other:

The last time I felt these symptoms was on: (dd/mm/yyyy)

At that time, my symptoms lasted days

My symptoms affected my daily activities: Yes No

If "Yes", how?

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Questions for my doctor:

6. Here are a few questions you may want to ask your doctor.

(Depending on your situation, not all questions may apply to you.)

1. What is the likely cause of my symptoms?
2. What kind of tests will I need?
3. Is there anything I can do to reduce my risk of atrial fibrillation?
4. What treatment do you recommend for my atrial fibrillation?
5. What are the benefits of this treatment?
6. What are the side effects of this treatment?
7. What should I do if I have side effects?
8. How long do I have to stay on this treatment?
9. What can I do to make it easier to remember my medication?
10. What else can I do to help my atrial fibrillation?
11. What is my risk of having a stroke?
12. What can I do to reduce my risk of stroke?
13. What type of physical activity can I do?
14. When should I come back for a follow-up visit?

15. other:

16. other: