

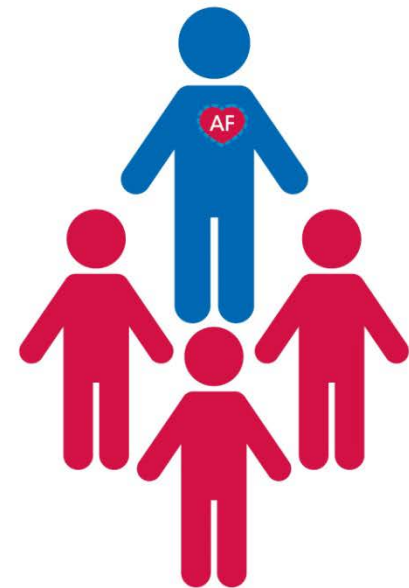
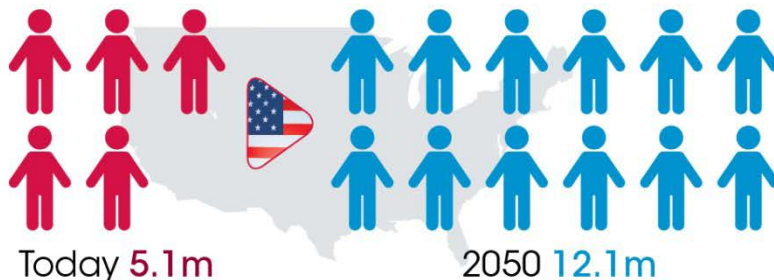
Patient Atrial Fibrillation Toolkit

What is atrial fibrillation?

- “AFib” (short for atrial fibrillation) is the most common type of irregular heartbeat, affecting literally millions of men and women



In the **US** the prevalence is projected to be more than **DOUBLED** by **2050**



~2% GENERAL POPULATION AFFECTED BY AF

~140,000,000 WORLDWIDE

These statistics are presented at the bottom of the infographic, with a world map in the background.

What is atrial fibrillation?

- AFib occurs when the upper chambers of the heart (called the atria) no longer contract in an orderly and regular manner, but rather twitch rapidly and uncontrollably
- AFib can be intermittent, lasting for minutes, hours or days at a time, but it can also become a permanent heart rhythm.



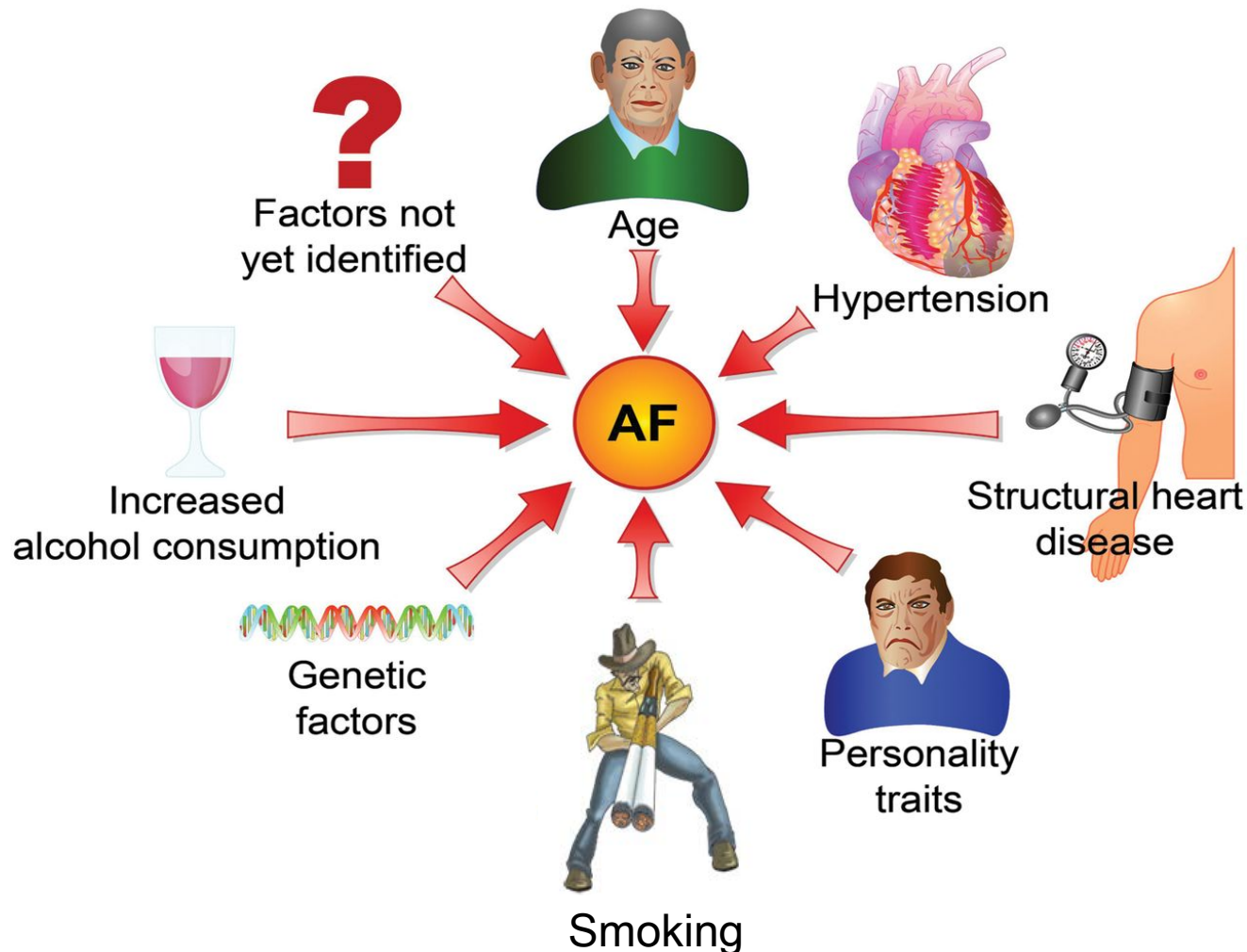
ECG of a normal heart rhythm showing regular heart beats



ECG of AFib showing "twitching" or fibrillation between irregular heart beats

What causes atrial fibrillation?

- The actual cause of AFib is not known, but is probably related in part to genetics and risk factors like older age, high blood pressure (hypertension), diabetes and other factors that cause heart disease



How can I tell if I have atrial fibrillation?

- AFib can be “silent” and detected by your doctor on an electrocardiogram (ECG)
- Most people with AFib have symptoms of palpitations (skips in the heart beat); some may also feel weak, tired, dizzy, short of breath or have a reduced ability to exercise

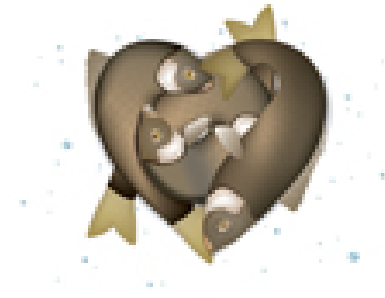
AFib Feels Like...



...**DRUMS**
POUNDING
IN MY CHEST.



...**THUNDER**
RUMBLING
IN MY CHEST.



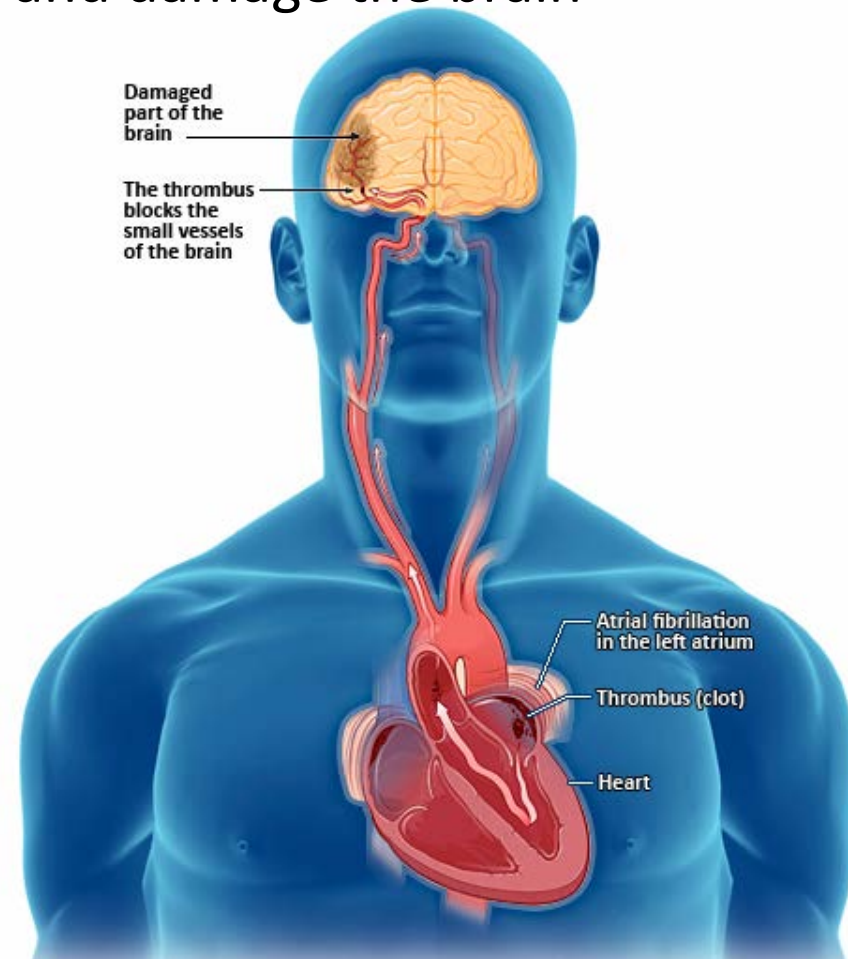
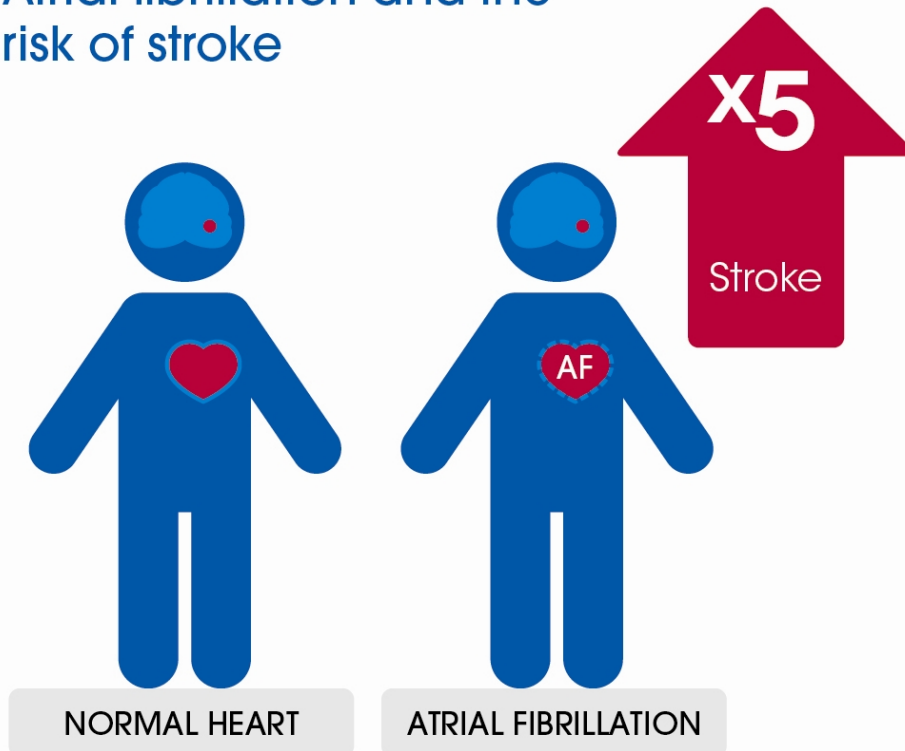
...**FISH**
FLOPPING
IN MY CHEST.

- But the worst and most dangerous presentation of AFib is **stroke**

What is it about AFib that causes stroke?

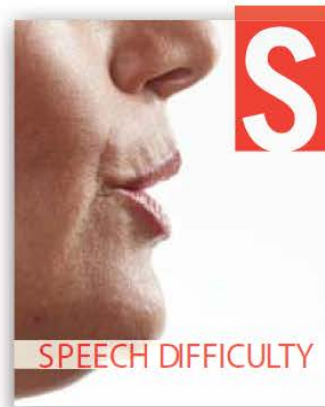
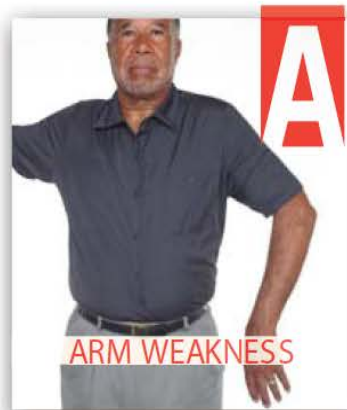
- Afib is a very common cause of stroke
- Stroke in AFib results from blood clots that form in the heart as a result of the rhythm and are ejected into body, most often to the brain where they block blood vessels and damage the brain

Atrial fibrillation and the risk of stroke



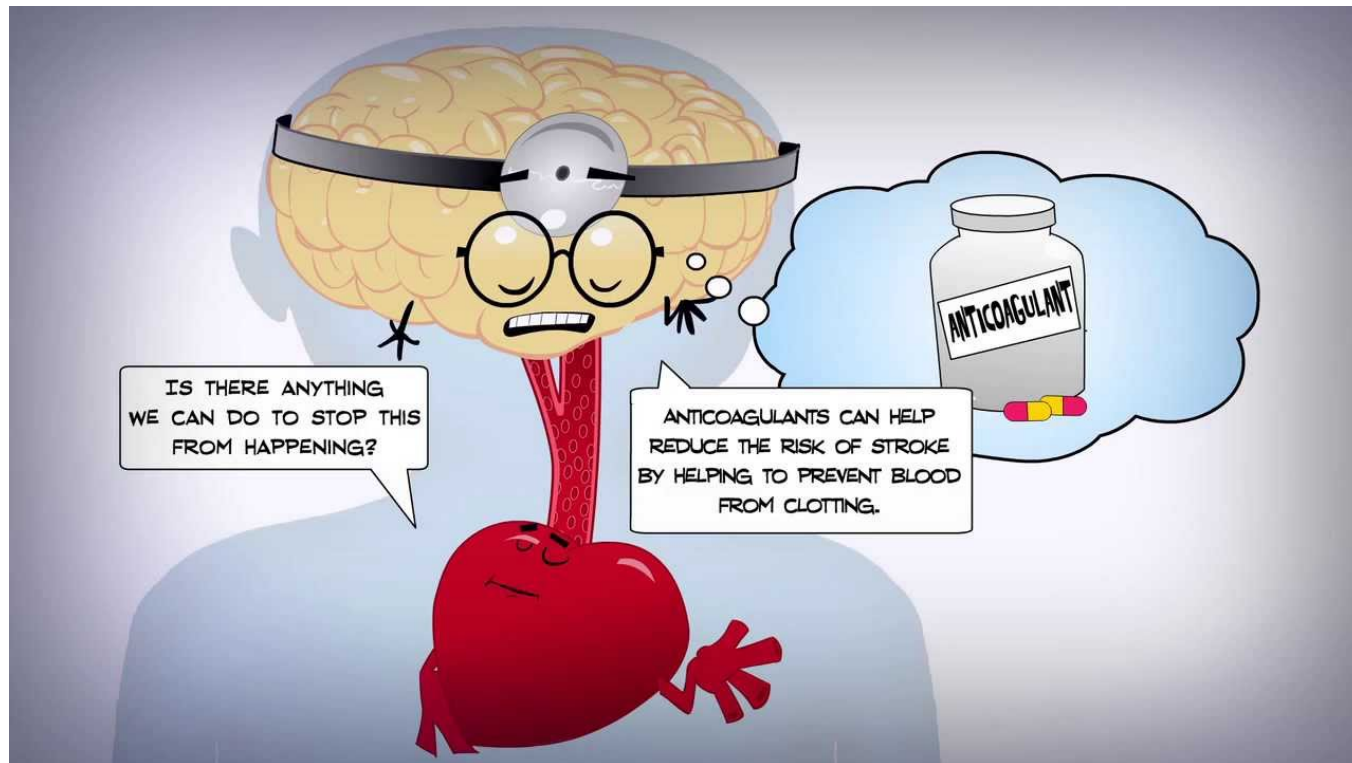
What are the signs of stroke?

- Know the signs of stroke by memorizing the F.A.S.T. algorithm
 - FACE – ask for a smile. Does one side of the face droop unevenly from the other?
 - ARMS – can both arms be raised? Does one arm drift downward?
 - SPEECH – do words sound slurred, garbled or make no sense?
 - TIME – time is brain. Call 911 immediately for help.



What can be done to prevent strokes from AFib?

- Strokes from AFib are preventable
- Your doctor may prescribe a medication (called an anticoagulant) that helps prevent blood clots from forming in the heart
- Though sometimes called “blood thinners” these medications do not actually affect blood thickness or thinness; rather they reduce the blood’s ability to form clot making it harder for clots to form in AFib



What factors increase my risk of stroke from Afib?

	Risk Factor		If Yes add:
C	Congestive Heart Failure	Do you have a history of congestive heart failure?	+1
H	Hypertension	History of high blood pressure?	+1
A	Age	Are you 75 yrs of age or older?	+2
D	Diabetes	Do you have diabetes?	+1
S	Stroke	Have you ever had a stroke or mini-stroke (TIA)?	+2
V	Vascular disease	Do you have vascular disease such as prior heart attack or peripheral vascular disease?	+1
A	Age	Are you between 65 and 74 years of age?	+1
Sc	Sex category	Are you female?	+1

Total Score: _____

- If you have AFib and a score of more than 1, you may be a candidate for anticoagulation

What can I do to reduce my risk of stroke?

- **Take the medication to prevent stroke exactly as prescribed:**

- Aspirin
- Warfarin (Coumadin)
- Apixaban (Eliquis)
- Edoxaban (Savaysa)
- Dabigatran (Pradaxa)
- Rivaroxaban (Xarelto)



- **Promote a healthy lifestyle**

- Exercise regularly
- Maintain healthy weight
- Control blood pressure
- Quit smoking
- Eat a heart healthy diet



How can I track my progress?

Example of AF Journal Table

Name of Medicine	Color	What's it for?	Dose	How often & what time	Special instructions	Side effects	Comment
<i>Aspirin</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Stroke prevention</i>	<i>325 mg pill</i>	<i>One daily at night</i>	<i>Take with food</i>	<i>Stomach upset</i>	
<i>Metoprolol</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Control heart rate</i>	<i>50 mg pill</i>	<i>One daily in morning</i>	<i>None</i>	<i>Tiredness</i>	<i>Ask doc about taking lower dose</i>
Date	Diet	Exercise Activity	Signs and symptoms	Weight	Heart Rate	Blood Pressure	Comment
<i>7/1/2015</i>	<i>1200 cal today</i>	<i>Walked 2 miles</i>	<i>Fatigue</i>	<i>140 lbs</i>	<i>90</i>	<i>120/84</i>	<i>INR 2.3</i>

Where can I get more information?

- Websites

NATIONAL STROKE ASSOCIATION: www.stroke.org

AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION: www.heart.org

HEART RHYTHM SOCIETY: www.hrsonline.org

Stop Afib: www.stopafib.org

- Smartphone Apps

inrpro.com/anticoagulation_apps.asp