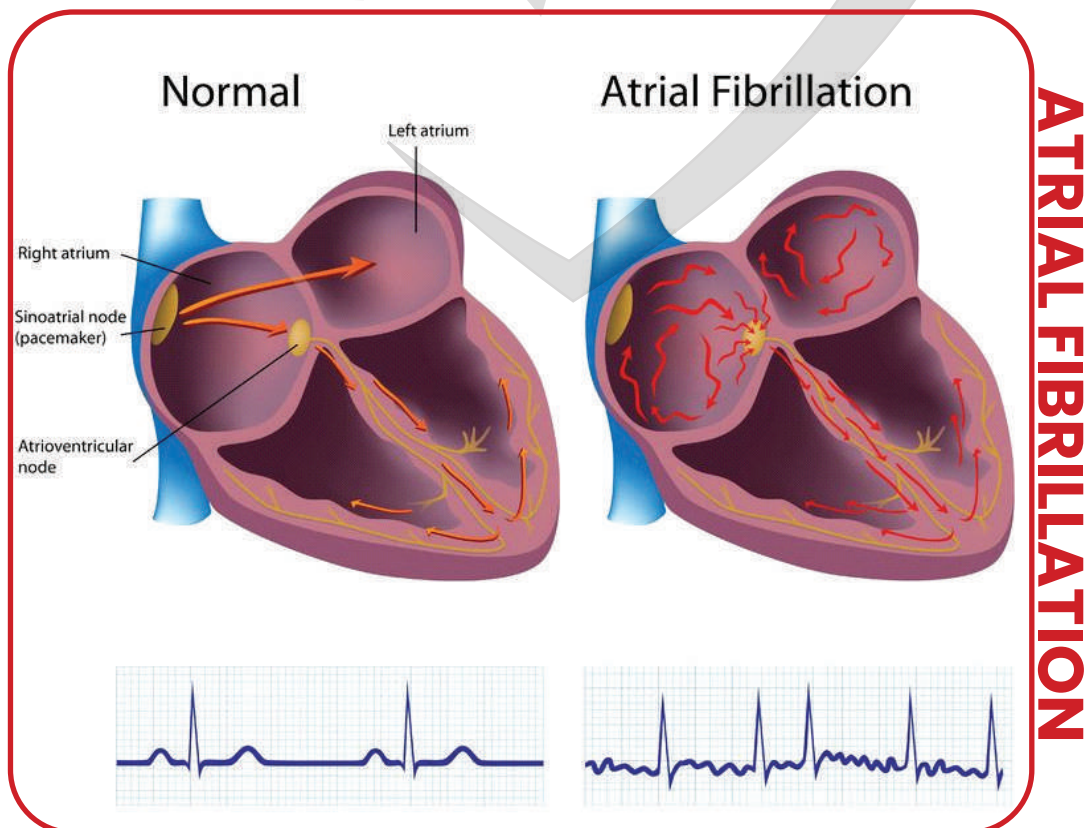


## WHAT IS ATRIAL FIBRILLATION?

Atrial fibrillation or AFib refers to the irregular and very rapid rhythm of the heart's upper chambers (the atria). During AFib, a specific portion of blood may not be pumped efficiently from the atria into the ventricles. And the leftover blood accumulated in the atria causes blood clots in the heart.

Your heart looks like a house that has walls, rooms, doors, plumbing, and an electrical system. All heart parts work together to perform its normal functioning; blood flows throughout the body and sends nutrients to other body organs. A healthy heart contracts and relaxes to a regular heartbeat caused by electrical signals of heart cells named 'sinus node.' These electrical signals enable the heart to contract and pump blood to the other body parts. Your doctor may use an electrocardiogram or ECG to record and analyze the normality of these electrical signals.



## HOW DO I KNOW ABOUT THE PRESENCE OF ATRIAL FIBRILLATION IN MY HEART?

Some people suffering from AFib may not feel its symptoms. Following are some of the symptoms of AFib;

- Rapid and irregular heartbeat
- Feeling of rapid fluttering in the chest
- Dizziness or fainting
- Chest pressure or pain.
- Shortness of breath, especially while lying down
- Feeling fatigue or tiredness

## THE POTENTIAL RISK OF ATRIAL FIBRILLATION

Somehow, you can live and manage with AFib. But if it is not diagnosed and treated early, it can cause other severe and life-threatening medical problems such as;

- Stroke
- Heart attack
- Heart failure
- Sudden cardiac arrest

**Alarming Fact:** People with AFib have five times higher risk of stroke caused by the accumulation of blood in the atria.

## WAYS TO TREAT THE AFIB

Treatment of AFibs depends upon the underlying cause, symptoms, and effects on the body. Your health care professional may adopt one or more of the following treatment options;

### MEDICATION

- Certain medications such as beta-blockers, calcium channel blockers, or digoxin can be used to slow your heart rate or to restore the normal heart rhythm.
- Anticoagulant or antiplatelet medications can also be used to prevent blood clots.
- Various procedures of electrical cardioversion or catheter ablation can be performed to stop or control the electrical impulses causing AFib.
- Pacemaker or other surgery options can also be used if medications can't treat the problem.

## PREVENTIVE MEASURES TO REDUCE THE RISK OF STROKE

You'll likely be prescribed anticoagulant or antiplatelet medications to prevent blood clots. Your health care professional will decide the type and dose of medication based on stroke risk. During medication; you must keep in mind;

- Before taking a new medication or having any procedure for other medical problems, you must tell your doctor, dentist, or pharmacist that you are taking these medicines to prescribe treatment accordingly; otherwise, it can cause bleeding.
- If you have missed your dose for any reason, immediately call your health care professional to discuss and take further directions.
- Moreover, if you experience any unusual bleeding, bruising, or other problems, you must report your health care professional right away.

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