

# What Is Atrial Fibrillation And Atrial Flutter ?



## Definition



### What Is AFib And AFlutter ?

Atrial fibrillation (AFib) and atrial flutter (AFlutter) are common types of abnormal heart rhythms (arrhythmia) which affect the upper chambers (atria) of the heart.

In AFlutter, the heart beats too fast, but mostly continues to contract in a regular rhythm. AFib is a closely related condition in which the atria contract in a chaotic manner. This creates an irregular heart rhythm that can be very fast when it is not controlled and is called AFib/ AFlutter with rapid ventricular response. As a result, the heart cannot pump enough blood to meet the body's needs.

## Symptoms



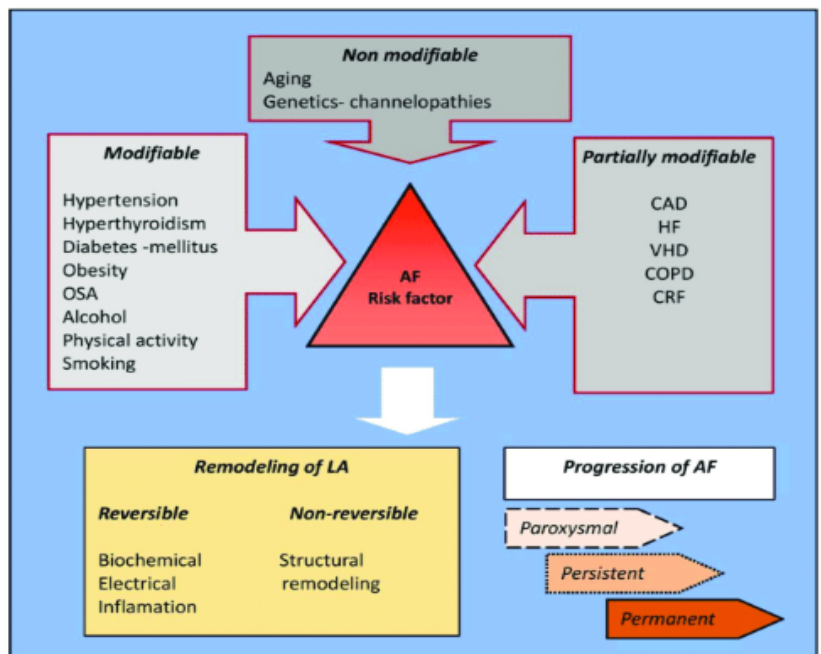
### How Does AFib/AFlutter Present ?

Pulse that feels rapid, racing, pounding, fluttering, irregular, or too slow.  
Sensation of feeling the heart beat (palpitations).  
Confusion.  
Dizziness, lightheadedness.  
Passing out  
Fatigue.Weakness.  
Anxiety.  
Shortness of breath.  
Sweating.  
Chest pain or pressure.  
Weight gain and leg swelling.

## Risk Factors



### What Are The Risk Factors of AFib/AFlutter ?



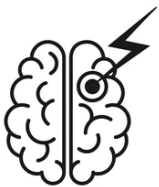
## Causes



## What Are The Causes Of AFib/AFlutter ?

Alcohol use (especially binge drinking)  
Coronary artery disease  
Heart failure or an enlarged heart  
Heart valve disease (most often the mitral valve)  
Hypertension  
Medicines  
Overactive thyroid gland (hyperthyroidism)  
Sick sinus syndrome

## Consequence



## What Are The Consequences Of AFib/AFlutter ?

Somehow, you can live and manage with AFib/AFlutter. 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  
Death

## Treatment



## How Do We Manage AFib/AFlutter ?

There is four main options to approach A fib / A Flutter:

1. Rate control: daily medicines taken by mouth to mainly slow the irregular heartbeat and if possible maintain normal heart rhythm, these drugs may include beta-blockers, calcium channel blockers, digoxin.
2. Rhythm control: daily medicines taken by mouth to slow the irregular heart beat and mainly maintain normal heart rhythm, called anti-arrhythmics.
3. Cardioversion: is used to get the heart back into a normal rhythm right away. There are two options for treatment: Electric shocks (mechanical) or chemical cardioversion (medical) or combination of both.
4. Ablation: procedure called radiofrequency ablation can be used to scar areas in your heart where the heart rhythm problems are triggered. This can prevent the abnormal electrical signals that cause AFib or AFlutter from moving through your heart.

All the above treatment are accompanied by blood thinner to Prevent blood clots to reduce the risk of stroke. This include heparin, warfarin (Coumadin), apixaban (Eliquis), rivaroxaban (Xarelto), edoxaban (Savaysa) and dabigatran (Pradaxa). Antiplatelet drugs such as aspirin or clopidogrel may also be prescribed. However , blood thinners increase the chance of bleeding, so not everyone can use them.

Another stroke prevention option for people who cannot safely take these medicines is the Left Atrial Appendage Occluder like Watchman Device.