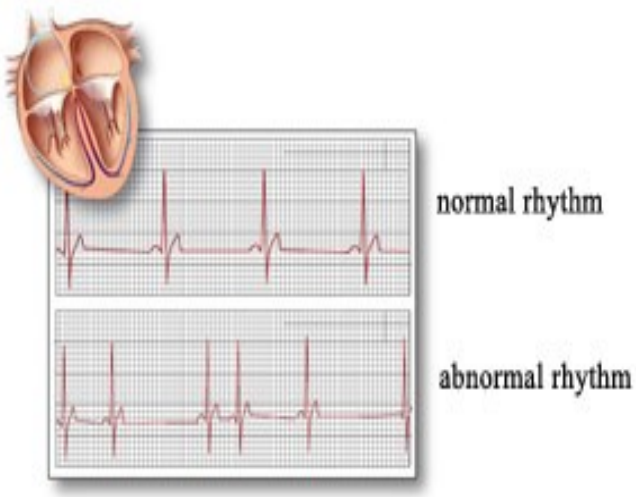
Atrial Fibrillation

Atrial fibrillation is an abnormal heart beat (*rhythm*). It can cause your heart rate to be faster or slower than normal, and can cause clots to form in your heart. These clots can cause other health problems. Atrial fibrillation may be caused by a heart attack, lung problem or certain medicine. Sometimes the cause of atrial fibrillation is not found.



TREATMENT

- Atrial fibrillation may be treated by:
  - Shocking your heart (*cardioversion*).
  - Medicine.
  - Surgery.
  - Pacemaker.
- Your doctor will explain which treatment may work best for you.

HOME CARE

- Take blood thinning medicine as directed by your doctor.
- Your doctor will need to draw your blood to check lab values if you take blood thinners.
- If you had a cardioversion, limit your activity as directed by your doctor. Do not lift anything heavy until your doctor says it is okay..
- Learn how to check your heart beat (*pulse*) for an abnormal or irregular beat. Your doctor can show you how.
- Ask your doctor if it is okay to exercise.
- Only take medicine as directed by your doctor.

GET MEDICAL HELP RIGHT AWAY IF YOU:

- Have trouble breathing or feel dizzy.
- Have swollen feet or ankles.
- Have blood in your pee (*urine*) or poop (*bowel movement*).
- Feel your heart "skipping" beats.
- Feel your heart "racing" or beating fast.
- Have weakness in your arms or legs.
- Have trouble talking, seeing or thinking.
- Have chest pain or pain in your arm or jaw.

MAKE SURE YOU:

- Understand these instructions.
- Will watch your condition.
- Will get help right away if you are not doing well or get worse.

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