Learn AFib by Heart

Learn the signs of atrial fibrillation (AFib) – know how you can act and adapt to reduce stroke risk

PREP NOTE: Ask the facilitator to provide a brief, written introduction to share with the program participants. Also prepare your opening remarks. For example, you may want to select an inspiring quote or reading.

• Kick off your program with a warm welcome and your opening remarks.
• Introduce the facilitator to your fellow community members. Or, if you are the facilitator, share with the group why this topic is important to you and your reason for offering to host this lesson.
Learn AFib by Heart
Lesson Overview

Welcome
• EmPowered To Serve and the ETS Health Check
• Program Topic and Urgent Community Need

Learn AFib by Heart
• Call to Action: Learn the signs of atrial fibrillation (AFib) — know how you can act and adapt to reduce stroke risk

Closing Thoughts

Supported by a charitable donation from:

• Get everyone “on topic” by reading through the lesson overview.
• Let participants know that the lesson takes about 1 – 1 ½ hours to complete.
What is ETS?
*EmPowered To Serve*

EmPowered To Serve is a movement sweeping our nation to improve the health of multicultural communities.

- We unite as the ETS megacommunity to make healthy change happen in diverse communities across the country.
- Learn More at EmPoweredToServe.org.

- Read the introduction to EmPowered To Serve.
- Share why you joined the ETS movement.
- Encourage anyone who has not yet joined the ETS megacommunity to go online after the program and sign up for this national movement.
- Note that ETS is a movement of the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association in partnership with community organizations across the country.
- Highlight the American Heart Association’s 2020 commitment to the country.
ETS Health Check

Blood pressure and weight check
• Starting point for you
• Optional and anonymous, no name

Why check blood pressure?
High blood pressure (HBP) is a risk factor for heart disease, the No. 1 killer worldwide.
HBP is also a risk factor for stroke, the No. 2 killer worldwide.

Why worry about being overweight?
Nearly 70 percent of adults are either overweight or obese.
Being obese puts you at a higher risk for heart disease, stroke, HBP, diabetes, and more.

• Explain that the EmPowered To Serve Health Check is a way for community members learn about their blood pressure and current weight.
  • Review the information on why to check blood pressure.
  • Highlight the reasons for worrying about being overweight.

• This optional health screening gives information needed to complete the My Life Check personal health assessment.
• If you have not already done so, please complete the My Life Check assessment using your unique URL. It only takes a few minutes to complete. Our goal is for 15 percent of our group to complete this simple health assessment.
• Did you already complete the My Life Check assessment?
  • Have you been working on making healthier choices?
  • You may want to go online and take the assessment again.
• Check your score. See how you are doing!
Program Objectives

By the end of this lesson, you’ll be able to:

• Know the signs, symptoms and increased stroke risk for atrial fibrillation.
• Talk to your healthcare provider and learn how AFib can increase stroke risk.
• Understand healthy living with AFib and how to reduce your stroke risk.

Learn the signs of atrial fibrillation (AFib). Know how you can act and adapt to reduce stroke risk.

• Review the program objectives.
• Ask the group:
  • What brings you here today to learn about atrial fibrillation, also known as AFib or AF?
  • Do you know anyone who has AFib?
  • Does anyone know what causes Afib?
What Is Atrial Fibrillation (Also Known As AFib or AF)?

Atrial fibrillation (AFib) is the most common type of irregular heartbeat. Instead of beating in a normal pattern, the upper heart valves "quiver" or "flutter."
- They beat irregularly and too fast.
- Blood flow slows, which can cause blood clots.
- As a result, the risk for stroke is five times higher.

Review the information on the slide. Play the Normal Heartbeat video, followed by the AFib Heartbeat video.
If your video player does not work, demonstrate by clapping an even tempo with your hands, followed by a fast and irregular tempo. Share with the group that your heart is like a machine - it can only work efficiently if all the parts work together correctly.

Normal Heartbeat:
https://player.vimeo.com/video/140708324

AFib Heartbeat:
https://player.vimeo.com/video/140708321
Afib Is On The Rise Nationwide.

Some groups are less likely to be aware they have the condition:

• An estimated 2.7 million Americans are living with AFib. That number could grow as high as 12 million by the year 2050.

• It’s the most common “serious” heart rhythm problem in people over 65.

• In a national study, blacks were approximately one-third less likely than whites to be aware they had Afib.
These AFib survivor videos were developed by the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association in collaboration with our national partners on our AFib programs: Bristol-Myers Squibb and Pfizer.

PREP NOTE: Before the program, review the resource list for this lesson. Check the URL for the video. If you are not going to have a live Internet connection, download the video ahead of time to your computer. Or, skip this slide and ask for anyone who wants to share a personal or caregiver story related to AFib.

- Play the video.

https://youtu.be/fKJ7B0Krq4A
PREP NOTE: Before the program, review the resource list for this lesson. Check the URL for the video. If you are not going to have a live Internet connection, download the YouTube video ahead of time to your computer. Or, skip this slide and ask for anyone who wants to share a personal or caregiver story related to AFib.

• Play the video.
https://youtu.be/1yk4C8yvJeM
Learn about atrial fibrillation (AFib) — signs, symptoms and increased stroke risk.

Ask the group:
• Does anyone know the signs and symptoms of AFib?
These AFib videos were developed by the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association in collaboration with our national partner on our AFib programs: Bristol-Myers Squibb.

PREP NOTE: Before the program, review the resource list for this lesson. Check the URL for the video. If you are not going to have a live Internet connection, download the video ahead of time to your computer. Or, skip this slide and ask for anyone who wants to share a personal or caregiver story related to AFib.

• Play the video.

https://youtu.be/nRBNbBD--V8
What Does AFib Feel Like?

"My heart flip-flops, skips beats, and feels like it's banging against my chest wall, especially if I'm carrying stuff up my stairs or bending down."

"I was nauseated, light-headed and weak. I had a really fast heartbeat and felt like I was gasping for air."

"I had no symptoms at all. I discovered my AF at a regular check-up. I'm glad we found it early."

INSTRUCTOR NOTE: Ask one person from the class to read each quote out loud.
What Are Other Symptoms of AFib?

Sometimes, people with AFib have no symptoms, and the condition is only found by getting a health exam. Others may have some additional common symptoms:

- General fatigue
- Rapid and irregular heartbeat
- Fluttering or “thumping” in the chest
- Dizziness
- Shortness of breath and anxiety
- Weakness
- Faintness or confusion
- Fatigue when exercising
- Sweating
- Chest pain or pressure

Chest pain or pressure is a medical emergency. You may be having a heart attack. **Call 9-1-1 immediately.**

Some people never have symptoms, and they are diagnosed by a physical exam and an EKG/ECG.
Possible risk factors for AFib are advanced age, heart disease (prior heart attack or heart failure), high blood pressure, diabetes, excessive alcohol drinking, smoking, obesity, sleep apnea, heart valve problems and/or other chronic-medical or heart-related problems.

Some studies support the idea that it is passed down in families.
What Are The Risks Of Living With AFib?

Most people who have AFib are unaware of their increased risks, especially for stroke:

- A person with AFib is at five times higher stroke risk.
- Strokes caused by AFib are more severe than strokes from other causes.
- A person with AFib is at three times higher risk for heart failure.

You can live with AFib, but it can lead to other problems: chronic fatigue, heart failure and — worst of all — stroke. You’ll need a doctor to help you control the problem.

Ask the group:
- If you or someone you know has AFib symptoms and signs, what should you do?
Point #2

Talk to your healthcare provider. Learn how AFib can increase stroke risk.

Explain to the group:

- If you, or someone you love, experiences AFib symptoms or signs, speaking to your healthcare provider and knowing your heart health and potential risks is a very important first step.
Talk to Your Healthcare Provider.

A healthcare provider can assess your heart for atrial fibrillation.

• If you have AFib, several factors, such as length and severity of your AFib, determine your healthcare provider’s recommendation for treatment.

• Treatment may include medications, nonsurgical procedures or surgical procedures.

PREP NOTE: Before the program, review the resource list for this lesson. Check the URL for the video. If you are not going to have a live Internet connection, download the video ahead of time to your computer. Or, skip this slide and ask for anyone who wants to share a personal or caregiver story related to AFib.

• Play the video.

https://youtu.be/uP-dWHlwFZ4
AFib Causes Increased Stroke Risk.

- People with AFib are five times more likely to have a stroke.
- AFib creates poor blood flow, which can lead to blood clots and stroke.
- Stroke is the No. 5 cause of death in the US (No. 2 cause of death worldwide). Stroke is a leading cause of disability.

Not only does AFib increase your risk of stroke, those strokes correlated with AFib are often very serious or even lethal.

Ask the group:
- Does anyone know what causes a stroke?
- What are the warning signs of stroke?
What is a Stroke?

Stroke is caused by reduced circulation of blood to the brain, called an ischemic stroke.

- A blood vessel (artery) carrying blood and oxygen (nutrients) to the brain is blocked by a clot or fatty plaque or bursts.
- When the part of the brain affected by the diseased artery cannot get enough blood and oxygen, the brain cells at that part of the brain die causing a stroke.

If you think you are having a stroke call 9-1-1 immediately!

• Review the information on the slide.
Let's do a shout out. The warning signs of a stroke are F.A.S.T.

- **F** for ________.
- **A** for ________.
- **S** for ________.
- **T** for ________.

**Answer**

**F** Face Drooping – Does one side of the face droop or is it numb? Ask the person to smile. Is the person’s smile uneven?

**A** Arm Weakness – Is one arm weak or numb? Ask the person to raise both arms. Does one arm drift downward?

**S** Speech Difficulty – Is speech slurred? Is the person unable to speak or hard to understand? Ask the person to repeat a simple sentence, like “The sky is blue.” Is the sentence repeated correctly?

**T** Time to call 9-1-1 – If someone shows any of these symptoms, even if the symptoms go away, call 9-1-1 and get the person to the hospital immediately. Check the time so you’ll know when the first symptoms appeared.

Ask the group: If someone has the F.A.S.T. warning signs, what should you do?
PREP NOTE: Before the program, review the resource list for this lesson. Check the URL for the “Stroke Warning Signs Symptoms—Body Language” video. If you are not going to have a live Internet connection, download the YouTube video ahead of time to your computer. Or, skip this slide.

Play the video.

https://youtu.be/wH7k5CFp4hI
Point #3

Live with AFib. Reduce your stroke risk.

• Ask the group:
  • Have you heard of Life’s Simple 7?
How Does AFib Change Daily Life?

People with AFib can lead healthy, long lives while taking actions to reduce their risk for stroke and other potentially related conditions such as heart failure.

Actions include:

• Meet regularly with your healthcare provider to understand your risks and treatment options (possible medications and/or procedures)
• Set personal health goals and maintain a heart-healthy lifestyle by following Life’s Simple 7 (described on the next slide)
• Track your symptoms, health goals, and (if applicable) medications.
Manage Blood Pressure
High blood pressure is a major risk factor for heart disease and stroke. When your blood pressure stays within healthy ranges, you reduce the strain on your heart, arteries and kidneys which keeps you healthier longer.

Control Cholesterol
High cholesterol contributes to plaque, which can clog arteries and lead to heart disease and stroke. When you control your cholesterol, you are giving your arteries their best chance to remain clear of blockages.

Reduce Blood Sugar
Most of the food we eat is turned into glucose (or blood sugar) that our bodies use for energy. Over time, high levels of blood sugar can damage your heart, kidneys, eyes and nerves.

Get Active
Living an active life is one of the most rewarding gifts you can give yourself and those you love. Simply put, daily physical activity increases your length and quality of life.

Eat Better
A healthy diet is one of your best weapons for fighting cardiovascular disease. When you eat a heart-healthy diet, you improve your chances for feeling good and staying healthy – for life!

Lose Weight
When you shed extra fat and unnecessary pounds, you reduce the burden on your heart, lungs, blood vessels and skeleton. You give yourself the gift of active living, you lower your blood pressure and you help yourself feel better, too.

Stop Smoking
Cigarette smokers have a higher risk of developing cardiovascular disease. If you smoke, quitting is the best thing you can do for your health.

Ask the group:
PREP NOTE: Before the program, review the resource list for this lesson. Check the URL for the video. If you are not going to have a live Internet connection, download the YouTube video ahead of time to your computer. Or, skip this slide.

- Play the video.
  https://youtu.be/s-VtnGC7rrs
Already Living With AFib?

Grow healthier and reduce your risk for stroke.

Ask the group:

• If you were to experience AFib symptoms, would you feel well-prepared to speak to your healthcare provider?
Explore The AFib Five.

Understand your diagnosis.
Learn to live your healthiest life!

- Free digital guide for newly diagnosed AFib patients and caregivers
- Embedded links to printable resources such as guides for making the most of your doctor visits as well as symptom and medication trackers

Call to Action
You've learned signs of AFib and now know signs, symptoms, the increased risk of stroke and the importance of speaking to your healthcare provider.

Share what you learned with 5 friends!

Give 5 people you care about the power to save lives!
Ask them to visit www.empoweredtoserve.org and heart.org/afibawareness.

- Review the call to action on the slide.
- Engage the group—ask:
  - How can you spread the word about AFib in your community?
Create a Culture of Health

Commit to take action:
• Go to EmPoweredToServe.org.
• Use My Life Check® to check your progress.
Join Us for more ETS Programs.

• Encourage everyone to be active in the EmPowered To Serve movement.
• Share how being part of the ETS megacommunity helps you embrace a lifestyle of health.
• Encourage everyone to come to a future ETS health lesson.
Wrap-Up

We appreciate your thoughts!

• Post what you liked best online at:
  http://community.empoweredtoserve.org/home

• Thank everyone for coming.
• Thank the facilitator and all of the volunteers who help coordinate the program.
• Take a moment to share an inspirational reading or ask the group to join you in an uplifting song.
• Reminder! Once your participants have left, be sure to complete the Ambassador Questionnaire. For details, see your Ambassador Guide, page 11.
EmPoweredToServe.org

Help create a sustainable culture of health:

- Unite with others to drive lasting (sustainable) positive change.
- Learn ways to improve community beliefs and behaviors (culture) about health.
- Share best practices and develop strategies that promote sound body, mind, and spirit (health).

• Put this slide up as your closing slide and leave it up until all of the participants leave the room.
We are EmPowered To Serve
...Serve our health, serve our community

The American Heart Association requests that this document be cited as follows:
American Heart Association EmPOWERED To Serve Health Lessons. empoweredtoserve.org
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