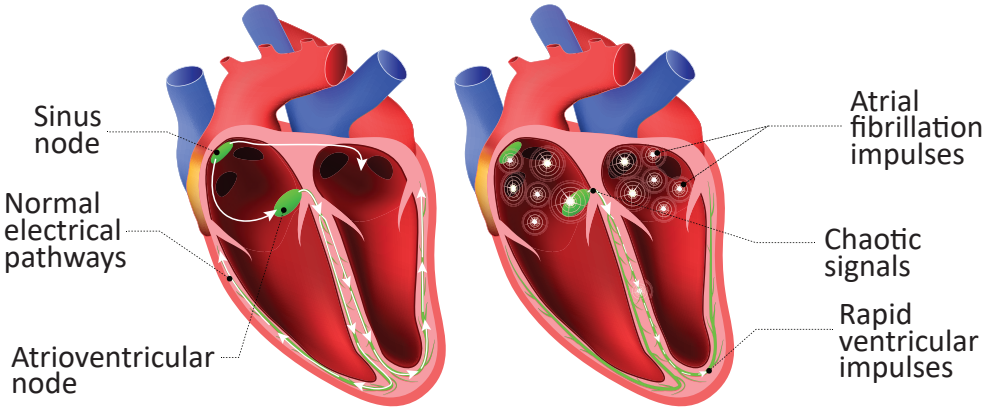
Dysrhythmia

Cardiac arrhythmia



NORMAL HEART *ATRIAL FIBRILLATION*

Possible Causes

- Heart pulpitations
- Lack of energy
- Dizziness
- Chest pain or discomfort
- Shortness of breath
- Fainting or collapse
- Sudden death

What is it?

Dysrhthmia is an irregular heart beat, also known as **Arrhythmia**. Normal heart beat results from an impulse generated by a complex electrical system. The two upper chambers (atriums) contract first, followed by the two lower chambers (ventricles). There are many different types of dysrhythmias, caused by a number of different factors. Atrial fibrillation is one of the most common types. Ventricular fibrillation is the riskiest.

Risks factors

- High blood pressure
- Coronary Artery Disease
- Congenital Heart Disease (present at birth)
- Heart failure
- Pulmonary Embolism (blood clot in lung)
- Hyperthyroidism (overactive thyroid)
- 10% of people will have no underlying heart condition
- Alcohol abuse
- Abnormal heart valves
- Cardiomyopathy (a disease of the heart muscle)
- Chronic Lung Disease
- Certain drugs
- Severe infections
- Stress
- Metabolic imbalances
- Excessive caffeine intake

Diagnosis

The diagnosis is a cardiograph (ECG) to identify the type of Dysrhythmia.

Thereafter, further testing, such as blood tests and radiology, may be needed.

Treatment

- **Identification** and **management** of the cause of the problem. Various medications can restore the heart to a normal rhythm and control the heart rate.
- **Blood thinners** reduce the risk of blood clots forming.
- When medication is not effective, a procedure called **Cardioversion** may be necessary.
- **Cardiac Ablation Therapy**
- A device, called a **Pacemaker**, can also be inserted to control the heart rhythm.
- An **ICD (Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillator)** is a device which detects abnormal heart rhythm and responds to correct it. It can be used – but is very expensive.
- A **Maze procedure** (an open heart surgical procedure where incisions are made in the atriums to stop abnormal electrical impulses from forming).

Management

THE MAIN GOALS OF MANAGING DYSRYTHMIA INCLUDE:

1. Managing any conditions that cause or contribute to the disease
2. Stopping the disease from getting worse
3. Controlling signs and symptoms so that you can live as normally as possible
4. Reducing complications and the risk of a heart attack

LIFESTYLE CHANGES