

# Having Heart Surgery? Have Afib?

**ACT**  
against Afib

# Is Ablation Right for Me?

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**Have Afib? Having Heart Surgery?**

**Ask Your Surgeon if Surgical Ablation is Right For You.**

## **Ablation for Afib May Help.\***

- You live longer and feel better
- You stay out of the hospital (readmissions lower)
- Your heart pumps more strongly (EF improves)
- You walk faster and feel better
- You get off coumadin and bleed less

\*Source: Marrouche, N.F, Brachmann, J., & CASTLE-AF Steering Committee. (2009). Catheter Ablation Versus Standard Conventional Treatment in Patients With Left Ventricular Dysfunction and Atrial Fibrillation (CASTLE-AF) – Study Design. Pacing Clin Electrophysiol, 32(8):987-94, DOI: 10.1111/j.1540-8159.2009.02428.x.

**If you have persistent Afib, or long-standing persistent Afib, surgical ablation during heart surgery is more effective at making sure the Afib doesn't recur.<sup>11,14-15</sup>**

**Learn More at [ACTagainstAfib.com](http://ACTagainstAfib.com).**

# What is Afib?

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**Atrial fibrillation is an abnormal and irregular heartbeat, or heart rhythm.** It occurs in the heart's upper chambers, the atria. Atrial fibrillation is caused by erratic electrical signals in the heart. You might also hear atrial fibrillation called AF, or Afib.

## Symptoms of Afib:<sup>1</sup>

- Shortness of breath
- Fatigue
- Weakness
- Feeling lightheaded
- Chest pain
- Lowered blood pressure
- Heart palpitations  
(a feeling that the heart is racing)

## **Is Afib Always Detected Before Heart Surgery?**

**No. Not always.** Before you have heart surgery, it's very important to mention to your surgeon if you have Afib, or symptoms of Afib.

**Ask your surgeon about ablation to treat your Afib.**

# Afib Can Negatively Affect How a Person Feels in Other Ways, Too.

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**Medications:** People with Afib often need to take medications to slow the heart rate and/or control the heart rhythm. Blood thinners are often used to prevent clots, and thus prevent stroke. These medications may have the following side effects:<sup>2,3</sup>

- Excessive bleeding
- Dizziness
- Blurred vision
- Confusion
- Weakness
- Bleeding in the stomach or intestines
- Bleeding in the brain
- Seizures
- Fatigue
- Reddish-colored skin
- Swelling in the abdomen, ankles, or feet
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Blood in stool or urine
- Dry mouth, eyes, and skin



**Quality of Life:** A person's quality of life can decline due to:<sup>4</sup>

- Symptoms of Afib
- Side effects of medication
- Stress over medications
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Frequent clinic and doctor visits<sup>5</sup>



**Decreased Activity:** The symptoms of Afib can cause a person to become less physically active. This may also lead to fewer social activities with friends and family.<sup>4</sup>

# Why is Surgical Ablation of Your Afib So Important?

If you have Afib and are going to have surgery, your two heart issues can be corrected during one surgery.

1. Medical societies recommend it.<sup>6-10</sup>
2. It can help stop the Afib and reduce burden on the heart, yet only about 20–30% of people who have Afib before their surgery get surgical ablation.<sup>11-13</sup>
3. Surgical ablation has the highest chance to restore a normal heart rhythm.  
**Research has shown it can help people with Afib to live longer.**<sup>11,14-15</sup>

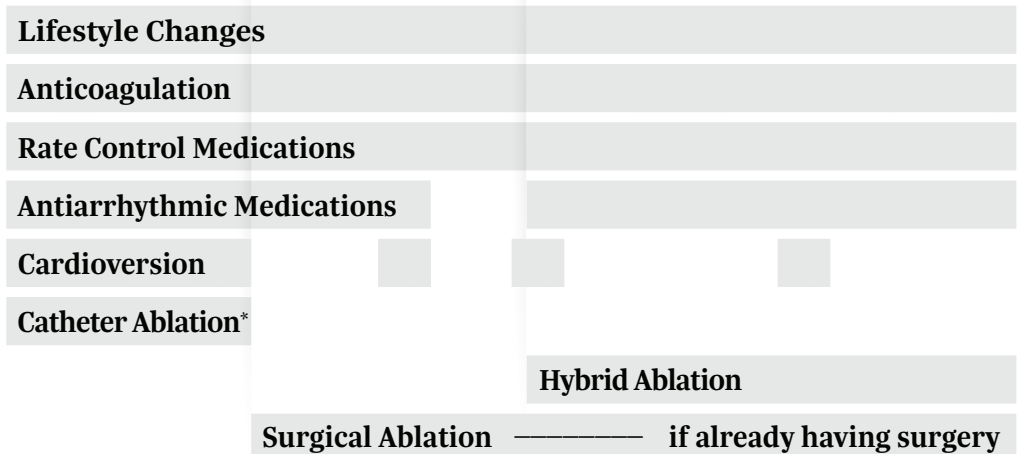
## Stages of Afib and Common Treatments

### Types of Afib



### Diagnosis

### Possible Treatments for Afib



Source: Developed with the special contribution of the European Heart Rhythm Association (EHRA), Endorsed by the European Association for Cardio Thoracic Surgery (EACTS), Authors/Task Force Members, Camm, A.J., et al. (2010). Guidelines for the management of atrial fibrillation: the Task Force for the Management of Atrial Fibrillation of the European Society of Cardiology (ESC). European Heart Journal, 31(19):2369-429.

\*Some catheters may have received an early persistent indication, defined as Afib less than 6 months, for use during catheter ablation.

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Clinical results are not predictive and individual results may vary.

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