

# Taking medicine to prevent a stroke

## A plan for people with atrial fibrillation

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_ Emergency contact: \_\_\_\_\_

General practitioner (GP): \_\_\_\_\_ Other health care providers: \_\_\_\_\_

### How do I use this plan?



Use this plan to learn about atrial fibrillation, stroke and anticoagulant medicine. You can also:

- Write information about your anticoagulant medicine on page 1 with your doctor (GP).
- Write information about your health goals on page 2 with your doctor (GP).
- Share this information with your other health care providers.

**Health care providers** are people like your doctor (GP), blood collector, dentist, dietitian, nurse, pharmacist, physiotherapist, podiatrist and specialist. You can show them this plan, so they know you are taking an anticoagulant medicine.

### What are atrial fibrillation and stroke?



- Atrial fibrillation is a condition where your heart beats irregularly.
- Atrial fibrillation can cause blood clots to form in your heart.
- If the blood clot goes to your brain, you might have a stroke.
- A stroke can damage the brain. This can affect how you move, talk, swallow or think.
- Atrial fibrillation is a condition that does not go away.

### How do anticoagulants work?

- Anticoagulants are a blood thinning medicine.
- They make it harder for blood to form a clot.
- Taking an anticoagulant can help lower your risk of a stroke.
- The type and dose of anticoagulant you take might change, but you will need to take it for your whole life if you have atrial fibrillation.

Watch this video to find out more about anticoagulants  
Use the QR code or link below:



<https://shorturl.at/1G30a>

### Information about your anticoagulant medicine (doctor (GP) to fill in)

Medicine name	How much to take (dose)	When to take it

**⚠ Do not stop your anticoagulant unless your doctor (GP) says you can**

#### Talk to your doctor (GP) about:

- The bleeding risk from anticoagulants
- What you can do to prevent or manage bleeding or bruising
- What to do if you miss a dose of your anticoagulant
- Wearing a medical alert card or bracelet (so, people can see that you take anticoagulants)
- When to make a medical appointment



Questions about your medicines?  
**Call Medicines Line 1300 633 424**



Translating and Interpreting  
Services (TIS)  
**Call 131 450**

# Living with atrial fibrillation

## Know the symptoms of atrial fibrillation



Feeling dizzy or faint



Shortness of breath



Fluttering or pounding heart



Extreme tiredness



Chest pain

Anticoagulants are just for stroke prevention if you have atrial fibrillation.

You might need other medicines to help with some of these symptoms.

Not everyone with atrial fibrillation will have symptoms.

Contact your doctor (GP) within 24 hours if you notice any new symptoms or your symptoms get worse

## Use your medicine safely



- Take your medicines how your doctor (GP) prescribed them. Every day, even when you feel well.
- If you need help with managing your medicines, talk to your pharmacist.
- Check with your doctor (GP) or pharmacist before you start any other new medicines. This includes prescription medicines, over-the-counter medicines, vitamins, and supplements.

Ways to help your heart	My goals	How will I reach them
<input type="checkbox"/> Aim for a healthy weight		
<input type="checkbox"/> Control blood pressure		
<input type="checkbox"/> Stop smoking		
<input type="checkbox"/> Drink less alcohol		
<input type="checkbox"/> Move your body		
<input type="checkbox"/> Other actions		

**Connect** If you are feeling anxious or concerned reach out to:



- family or friends
- other people with atrial fibrillation who will understand how you are feeling
- a trusted health professional



[About atrial fibrillation](#)



[About stroke prevention](#)



[About wellbeing](#)

**Go straight to a hospital or CALL 000 and ask for an ambulance, if any of these happen:**



### Signs of stroke

- **F:** face drooped
- **A:** arms can't be raised
- **S:** speech slurred or confused
- **T:** time is critical call 000



### Signs of serious bleeding

- Nose bleeds that do not stop
- Coughing or vomiting blood
- Blood in urine or bowel movements
- Bleeding or bruising that gets worse
- Sudden and severe headache

Quality Use of Medicines Alliance



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Helping consumers and health professionals make safe and wise decisions about medicines and diagnostics.  
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