

Your Electrophysiology Team

Atrial Fibrillation (AF) is managed by the Electrophysiology (EP) team and needs a team approach. The captain may be your cardiologist, but there are also other important members, including you.

Cardiologists specialize in diagnosing and treating heart problems. Depending on your treatment needs, you may remain under the care of a general cardiologist, or you may work with that cardiologist in conjunction with an electrophysiologist, an interventional cardiologist or a cardiovascular surgeon.

Electrophysiologists are cardiologists who have specialized knowledge and training in the electrical systems of the heart. Electrophysiologists have been trained to perform minimally invasive procedures such as pacemaker and ICD implantation, electrical cardioversion and ablation. These are among the treatment strategies used to manage AF and other heart rhythm problems.

Interventional cardiologists specialize in diagnosing and treating problems in the heart and blood vessels. You may see an interventional cardiologist if you have had a heart attack that was treated with angioplasty and stenting or if you have blocked arteries that cause angina.

Advanced Practice Providers (APPs): They are nurse practitioners and physician assistants who have completed advanced clinical training. They can diagnose and manage your heart conditions, review your treatment plan and answer the questions that you may have.

Office RN/ EP Nurse Navigators: If you decide to have a procedure to treat your AF, you will be cared for by a number of nurses who work with your cardiologist. Many of these nurses will have taken specialized training in a specific field of cardiac care, such as electrophysiology or interventional cardiology.

The Final and Most Important Member of the Team - You!

While your EP team is working hard to keep you healthy, there's a lot that you can and should do for yourself:

- Learn as much as you can about your AF and work closely with all your team members to stay on track with your treatment plan.
- Stay physically active and maintain a healthy weight.
- Eat a healthy diet that includes plenty of fruits, vegetables and whole grains. Avoid excess salt and saturated fats.
- Check with your doctor before taking any over-the-counter medications, especially cold and flu meds or herbal supplements that could affect your heart rate.
- Limit alcohol consumption.
- Don't smoke.

AF is the most common type of arrhythmia in America, so you are not alone. The good news is that AF management is improving, and new technologies and medications are now available. With the right EP management team in place, you can live a healthy and active life.

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Approved by Atrium Health Cardiac Patient Health Education Committee, March 2019.

Meet the Electrophysiology Team



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