

What can I do to stop Atrial Fibrillation (AF) before it starts?

Control Your Weight:

A healthy weight may help your AF or keep you from getting it. If you are overweight, losing weight can lower your chances of AF. Talk to your doctor about how much you should lose.

Eat Healthy:

Eat meals with lots of fruits, veggies and whole grains. Also eat low fat dairy products, poultry, fish and legumes (beans). Limit foods that are high in sodium (salt) or sugar, sweets, sugar-sweetened drinks and red meats. You can eat small amounts but not very often.

You should try the Mediterranean and DASH diets. The websites below will help you learn more about them: heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/eat-smart/nutrition.basics/mediterranean-diet

Eating meals with lots of grains, beans, veggies, fruits and nuts and no animal products may lower risks that may come with AF. Some of the risks are high blood pressure, obesity, diabetes (high blood sugar) and hyperthyroidism.

Quit Smoking:

If you smoke, you have a higher risk of having AF. Smokers who have AF are more likely to have a stroke.

Limit Caffeine Use:

Drinks like tea, coffee, energy drinks, colas, Sun Drop and Mountain Dew have lots of caffeine. Don't drink more than 1 of these drinks per day. Try not to take decongestants (medicine for stuffy nose) or weight loss pills.

Limit Alcohol Use:

Alcohol use can raise your risk of AF and make your symptoms worse. Women should have no more than 7 drinks a week. Men should have no more than 14 drinks a week. Some studies show that not drinking alcohol at all may be good for people with AF.

Work Out:

Working out is safe for people with AF. Each week, aim to do:

- A moderate workout for 150 minutes or
- A heavier workout for 60 to 75 minutes

Smaller 10-minute workouts can be added together to reach your goal. They are just as good as a long work out. So, a 30-minute workout can be 10 minutes 3 times. Your workout can be moderate (enough to get your heart beating faster) or heavy (you work up a sweat) or both. Workouts with heavy touching, impact and bumping are not safe for people on anticoagulation medicine. These kinds of workouts cause a higher bleeding risk.

Atrium Health complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate, exclude people or treat them differently based on race, color, religion, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability or source of payment.

ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-800-821-1535.

CHÚ Ý: Nếu bạn nói Tiếng Việt, có các dịch vụ hỗ trợ ngôn ngữ miễn phí dành cho bạn. Gọi số 1-800-821-1535.