

# Arrhythmia

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# What is Arrhythmia

- Arrhythmia is an improper beating of the heart, whether it is regular, irregular, too slow or too fast
- Its very common with more than 3 million cases per year
- Often triggered by electrolyte imbalance

# Symptoms

- Arrhythmia may not cause any signs or symptoms. But some symptoms may include:
  - Fluttering in chest
  - Racing heartbeat
  - Slow heartbeat
  - Chest pain
  - Shortness of breath
  - Sweating
  - Fainting (syncope)

# Causes

- Heart attack
- Blocked arteries in the heart (coronary artery disease)
- High blood pressure
- Smoking
- Stress
- Sleep apnea
- Genetics
- Over the counter cold medication, allergy medication, and dietary supplements

# Types of Arrhythmias

- Normal resting heart rate, beats 60 to 100 beats a minute.
  - Tachycardia
    - Fast heartbeat that greater than 100 beats a minute
  - Bradycardia
    - Slow heartbeat that less than 60 beats a minute
- Not all tachycardia or bradycardia indicates heart disease

# Atrial Tachycardia

- Tachycardia in the upper chambers of the heart
  - Atrial fibrillation
    - Rapid heart rate caused by chaotic electrical impulses
  - Atrial flutter
    - Beats regularly but faster than normal and more often than the ventricles
  - Supraventricular
    - Many forms of arrhythmia originating above ventricles

# Ventricular Tachycardia

- Tachycardia in the lower chambers of the heart
  - Regular heart rate with abnormal electrical signals
- Ventricular fibrillation
  - Heart beats with rapid erratic electrical impulses
- Long QT interval
  - Prolonged depolarization of the ventricle
  - Increases the likelihood of ventricular dysrhythmia

# Premature Heartbeat

- Skipped heartbeat or extra beat
- Contributing factors
  - Stress
  - Strenuous exercise



# Risk factors

- Heart disease and previous heart surgery
- High blood pressure
- Congenital heart disease
- Diabetes
- Alcohol abuse
- Thyroid problems

# Preventions

- Eating a healthy diet
- Increasing physical activity
- Avoid smoking
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Limiting caffeine and alcohol
- Proper stress and anger management
- Use of over-the-counter medications
  - Some cold and cough medications contain stimulants that may trigger a rapid heartbeat

# Preventions cont....

- Regular checkup
- Know the symptoms of arrhythmia. If you notice symptoms, report them to your doctor as soon as possible.
- Know the causes of arrhythmia and the factors that increase the risk of arrhythmia.

# References

- <https://www.hrsonline.org/Patient-Resources/Risk-Factors-Prevention>
- [http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/Arrhythmia/PreventionTreatmentofArrhythmia/Prevention-Treatment-of-Arrhythmia\\_UCM\\_002026\\_Article.jsp#.WzIvkNJKiuU](http://www.heart.org/HEARTORG/Conditions/Arrhythmia/PreventionTreatmentofArrhythmia/Prevention-Treatment-of-Arrhythmia_UCM_002026_Article.jsp#.WzIvkNJKiuU)
- <https://www.peacehealth.org/sacred-heart-riverbend/services/heart-and-vascular/heart-rhythm-services/Pages/prevention>