

# Don't **miss**



# a **beat**

Has your heart ever missed a beat? If your heart beats too quickly, too slowly or with an irregular pattern, you may have an arrhythmia. Most people have felt their heart race or skip a beat either with exercise or strong emotion. That type of arrhythmia is usually not cause for alarm. However, arrhythmia's that occur often or accompany other heart problems may be more serious and should be discussed with your healthcare provider.



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## Symptoms of Arrhythmia

With some types of arrhythmia, you may not experience symptoms. If you do have symptoms, they will depend on the type and severity of your arrhythmia. The most common symptoms include:

- ♥ palpitations—an unpleasant awareness of your heartbeat, often described as a thumping in your chest
- ♥ dizziness
- ♥ fainting or collapsing
- ♥ shortness of breath
- ♥ chest pain
- ♥ fatigue
- ♥ confusion
- ♥ pulmonary edema—fluid in your lungs

## Atrial Fibrillation

The most common arrhythmia, Atrial fibrillation (A-Fib), creates a disorganized electrical signal that causes a disturbance in the upper and lower chambers of the heart, preventing them from working together. A-Fib can damage the heart's electrical system leading to increased risk for stroke, heart attack or heart failure.

## Diagnosis

Since A-Fib can be symptomless, often it is discovered during a routine physical exam. Talk to your healthcare provider about your risk for A-Fib. Be sure to share any symptoms you may be experiencing and discuss your risk factors.

If A-Fib is detected, there are treatments options including medicines, medical procedures and lifestyle changes. Partner with your doctor to discuss the best options for you.

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Health is Action®

### Reduce your risk of developing an arrhythmia or slowing its progression.

#### DO

- Drink plenty of water
- Eat a heart-healthy diet
- Eliminate unnecessary stress
- Exercise regularly
- Maintain a healthy weight
- See your doctor regularly

#### DON'T

- Smoke or expose yourself to second-hand smoke
- Drink excessive amounts of alcohol, caffeine, or sugary drinks
- Ignore your symptoms, which may signal heart problems

