Common symptoms of Atrial Fibrillation

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AF Symptoms include:

- Breathlessness
- Lethargy
- Palpitations
- Dizziness
- Syncope/faint
- Chest pain
- Anxiety/stress
Why AF can cause symptoms...

Cardiac arrhythmia

- Sinus node
- Normal electrical pathways
- Atrioventricular node

Comparison:
- Normal heart
- Atrial Fibrillation

- Atrial fibrillation impulses
- Chaotic signals
- Rapid ventricular impulses
30% of people with AF do not experience any symptoms
Which is why

- Any one over 65 years should have manual pulse checks annually
And

- If you are aware of an irregular heart beat arrange an electrocardiogram (ECG) to rule out AF
Common concerns

Q1: Am I more likely to have a stroke during symptoms?
NO

BUT

Stroke risk is the same whether symptomatic or not
Common concerns continued……

Q2: how long should I let my palpitations persist before calling for help (A&E/Dr)??

Q3: when my heart beat is racing is my heart going to suddenly stop beating?

Q4: Will it cause a heart attack?
Concerns continued...

Q5: does stress cause AF symptoms?

Q6: does exercise help or hinder my symptoms?
In summary

• Symptoms affect 2/3rds of people with AF

• They can be very debilitating

• Stroke risk is the same whether symptomatic or not

• Manual pulse checks over 65 yrs recommended

• Symptoms can and should be treated to improve quality of life and reduce potential strain on the heart
Thank you for listening

Any Questions??