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ATRIAL FIBRILLATION

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For access to & information on how to use the Wellcare by Allwell provider portal, please visit:

<https://www.azcompletehealth.com/providers/resources/claims-payment.html>

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**CLINICAL CONCEPT WHEN DIAGNOSING
ATRIAL FIBRILLATION****DEFINITION:**

Atrial Fibrillation (A-fib) is an irregular and often very rapid heart rhythm (arrhythmia) that can lead to blood clots in the heart. Atrial Fibrillation increases the risk of stroke, heart failure and other heart-related complications.

RISK FACTORS:

- **Age**-The older a person is, the greater the risk of developing atrial fibrillation.
- **Heart Disease**-Anyone with heart disease such as heart valve problems, congenital heart disease, congestive heart failure, coronary artery disease, or a history of heart attack or heart surgery has an increased risk of atrial fibrillation.
- **High Blood Pressure**-Having high blood pressure, especially if its not well controlled with lifestyle changes or medications can increase the risk of atrial fibrillation.
- **Thyroid Disease**-In some people, thyroid problems may trigger heart rhythm problems (arrhythmias), including atrial fibrillation.
- **Other Chronic Health Conditions**-People with certain chronic conditions such as diabetes, metabolic syndrome, chronic kidney disease, lung disease or sleep apnea have an increased risk of atrial fibrillation.
- **Drinking Alcohol**-For some people, drinking alcohol can trigger an episode of atrial fibrillation. Binge drinking further increases the risk.
- **Obesity**-People who have obesity are at higher risk of developing atrial fibrillation.
- **Family History**-An increased risk of atrial fibrillation occurs in some families.

CLINICAL INDICATORS:

Some people with atrial fibrillation don't notice any symptoms. Those who do have symptoms may have signs and symptoms such as:

- Sensations of a fast, fluttering or pounding heartbeat (palpitations)
- Reduced ability to exercise, shortness of breath, lightheadedness
- Chest pain, dizziness, fatigue, weakness

EVALUATION AND PLAN OF CARE:

- Medications
- Therapy to reset the heart rhythm
- Catheter procedures to block faulty heart signals

DOCUMENTATION TIPS:

Atrial fibrillation should be documented to the highest level of specificity, when known:

- **Intermittent (paroxysmal)-Atrial fibrillation** symptoms come and go, usually lasting for a few minutes to hours. Sometimes symptoms occur for as long as a week and episodes can happen repeatedly. Symptoms might go away on their own. Some people with occasional atrial fibrillation need treatment.
- **Persistent (chronic)-With this type of atrial fibrillation**, the heart rhythm doesn't go back to normal on its own. If a person has persistent atrial fibrillation symptoms, cardioversion or treatment with medications may be used to restore and maintain a normal heart rhythm.
- **Long-Standing Persistent-This type of atrial fibrillation** is continuous and lasts longer than twelve (12) months.
- **Permanent-** In this type of atrial fibrillation, the irregular heart rhythm can't be restored. Medications are needed to control the heart rate and to prevent blood clots.
- **Active vs. Historical Atrial Fibrillation-**Below is a guide when determining whether atrial fibrillation should be documented as an active/current condition or documented as history of atrial fibrillation.
 - a) **Active (current)-Atrial fibrillation** that is symptomatic, asymptomatic because symptoms are controlled by medication, failed catheter procedure(s) (symptoms return after intervention) should be documented as an active (current) condition.
 - b) **Historical-Atrial fibrillation** that is asymptomatic without current medication to control the condition, post catheter procedure(s) that were successful without re-occurrence of symptoms should be documented as history of atrial fibrillation.

****NOTE: These guidelines attempt to define practices that meet the needs of most members in most circumstances. The ultimate judgment regarding the care of an individual member must be made by the provider and member in light of all circumstances presented by the member****

References:

[https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/atrial-fibrillation/symptoms-causes/syc-20350624#:~:text=Atrial%20fibrillation%20\(A%2Dfib\),and%20other%20heart%2Drelated%20complications.](https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/atrial-fibrillation/symptoms-causes/syc-20350624#:~:text=Atrial%20fibrillation%20(A%2Dfib),and%20other%20heart%2Drelated%20complications.)