

Atrial Fibrillation

Atrial Fibrillation is the most common cause of irregular heartbeat, known as cardiac arrhythmia. There are 500,000 people with undiagnosed AF in the UK.

Atrial Fibrillation (AF) significantly increases the risk of developing a blood clot in your heart, which can travel to your brain and cause a stroke.

For more information about AF please visit the NHS site: [Atrial fibrillation - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

The good news is that these risks can be significantly reduced with the correct course of treatment.

Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Integrated Care Board are leading on the implementation of a digital heart rhythm check to test for Atrial Fibrillation. Find out more below.

Please do not call your GP with enquires regarding this heart rhythm check. Your GP will either discuss using the App with you if you have Symptoms or contact you if they think you will benefit for the use of this App.

Who are we inviting to take part?

Digital Heart rhythm checks are being offered to people who currently present to the GP surgery with symptoms that suggest that they may have an abnormal cardiac rhythm. These are people who are **not thought to have immediate and life-threatening symptoms.**

In addition, a practice may also invite people that may be considered to be at higher risk of developing AF. **Please note that you will need to be specifically invited to participate in this programme, please do not contact the Practice directly requesting to participate.**

The chances of developing AF increase as you get older. It is much more common from age 65+. Having other conditions also makes AF more likely. They include:

Other diseases of the heart such as coronary heart disease and heart failure

- high blood pressure
- an overactive thyroid
- lung disease

- chest infections like pneumonia
- alcohol or drug misuse
- vascular disease
- diabetes
- any previous stroke or transient ischaemic attack (TIA)
- a diagnosis of dementia

What happens if I am invited to take part?

We are using new digital technology to help identify AF in people. This means you will need access to your own smartphone or be able to ask a family member/carer who has a smartphone to help.

This App is Called FibrCheck. To find out more about the App please follow the link below:

[FibrCheck: your heart's health at your fingertips](#)

How will the heart rhythm check work?

1. Your GP will discuss using the FibrCheck APP with you in your consultation to see if this might be appropriate for you.
2. Your GP will ask if you consent to using the App. This consent will be recorded on your medical record.
3. The GP will also explain what you need to know about using the APP:
 - **You must not share the free access code to the App with anyone else**
 - How to access the APP
 - Advise that you have 7 days free access after which time you will need to pay if you want to continue using the App
 - That you will receive a report in the FibrCheck App at the end of each measurement that will let you know that your reading is either normal or abnormal and needs further investigation

- When it is appropriate to seek urgent medical help

Call 999 if:

You have sudden chest pain that:

- spreads to your arms, back, neck or jaw
- makes your chest feel tight or heavy
- also started with shortness of breath, sweating, and feeling or being sick
- lasts more than 15 minutes

You could be having a [heart attack](#). Call 999 immediately as you need immediate treatment in hospital.

- How often and when to use the App (it is normally suggested to measure your cardiac rhythm twice a day during your 7-day period, but you can also use it at any time of the day or night when you are experiencing symptoms) – (there is no limit to the number of times you can take your readings during your 7-day free access)
 - That any abnormal readings are checked by a FibriCheck technician/cardiologist to verify the reading before submission to your GP
 - That your GP will receive a report within 48 hours of the first instance of an abnormal reading
 - Your GP will receive a report of the full week's readings at the end of the 7-day period whether the readings are normal or abnormal
4. If you consent to using the App, you will receive an automated text message or email from the Practice, with a link to further information and a Practice Code to allow you to download the FibriCheck APP and use it free of charge for 7 days **This link is unique to you and must not be shared.**
 5. You will need to create and activate your account. [Instructions on how to do this can be found here](#) [Insert link to document.](#)
 6. If you require further information or help downloading or using the App, you can call the UK FibriCheck support number on 01273 092051 or email support@fibrichck.com.
 - You must try to answer all of the questions as accurately as possible as the App uses your responses to help calculate your reading result.
 7. Use the FibriCheck to monitor your heart rhythm **twice a day for seven days.**
 8. You may measure your heart rhythm if you are experiencing symptoms at any time of the day or night in addition to the normal twice daily readings
 9. You can set and personalised your notifications within the App. The default is set to one or two reminders a week.
 10. To use the App, simply press the heart button in the App and place your finger on your smartphone camera, located at the back of the phone, for 60 seconds and your heart rhythm will be recorded. You will receive a summary of the reading on your phone after you have answered some simple questions

11. After seven days your results will be sent to your Practice and reviewed by your GP
12. If your readings are all normal (Green), you will not be contacted. If you continue to experience further symptoms, please contact your GP again.
13. If further investigation is required, you will be contacted directly by your GP who will explain the next steps.

Please note that if you wish to continue using the FibrCheck App after the seven-day period, this would be at your own cost and results will not be automatically shared with your clinician.

The goal of the FibrCheck heart health check is to help you and your doctors to understand your heart health. FibrCheck is a screening tool, not a diagnosis. A diagnosis is always made by the treating doctor who can consider your complete medical history and advise on the best course of action for you.

It's important to note that some people experience an irregular heart rhythm every now and then, rather than regularly or constantly. Some people may have a normal heart rhythm and then suddenly get an abnormal one, this is known as paroxysmal atrial fibrillation.

Both frequent and infrequent irregular heart rhythms carry the same risks and therefore both require frequent and regular checks.

How will my information be stored?

FibrCheck is a Medically Certified App that measures your heart rate and heart rhythm using the camera and flash of your smartphone. The results of these measurements will automatically be shared with your doctor.

FibrCheck processes and stores your personal and medical data with utmost care using a secure cloud which meets the highest industry standards. FibrCheck's data security is compliant with GDPR and adheres to NHS cyber security standards. You can find out more by checking FibrCheck's privacy policy. <https://pages.fibrcheck.com/privacy-policy/1.5.0/en/>