

Pulsed-field ablation for atrial fibrillation

Information for the public

Published: 10 July 2025

www.nice.org.uk

This procedure can be used to treat atrial fibrillation because it works well and there are no serious concerns about its safety in this condition.

Atrial fibrillation is irregular and rapid beating of the upper chambers of the heart (atria). It happens when the electrical impulses that control the heartbeat become irregular. Symptoms include palpitations, dizziness, shortness of breath and fatigue. Complications can include stroke. In this procedure, short bursts or pulses of electricity (pulsed-field) are used to target and destroy the heart cells (ablation) that are causing irregular beats. The aim is to avoid damage to surrounding tissues such as the oesophagus and nerves while treating the atrial fibrillation.

Is this procedure right for me?

You should be included in [making decisions about your care](#).

Your healthcare professionals should explain the risks and benefits of this procedure and how it is done. They should discuss your options and listen carefully to your views and concerns. They should offer you more information about the procedure. Your family or carers can be involved if you want or need them to be.

You will be asked to decide whether you agree (consent) to have the procedure. Find out more about [giving consent to treatment on the NHS website](#).

Some questions to think about

- How many appointments will I need?
- What are the possible benefits? How likely am I to get them?
- What are the risks or side effects? How likely are they?
- Will I have to stay in hospital?
- What happens if it does not work or something goes wrong?
- What happens if I do not want the procedure?
- Are other treatments available?

Information and support

The [NHS webpage on atrial fibrillation](#) may be a good place to find out more.

The [NHS website has information about NHS hospital services](#) and [referrals for specialist care](#).

- [NICE's information on HealthTech guidance](#) explains what HealthTech is and how we assess it.
- [NICE's information on HealthTech recommendations](#) explains the types of recommendation we make.

[Arrhythmia Alliance](#) (01789 867 501) can give you advice and support.

You can also get support from your local [Healthwatch](#).

ISBN: 978-1-4731-9026-9