

Checking your pulse may prevent a stroke

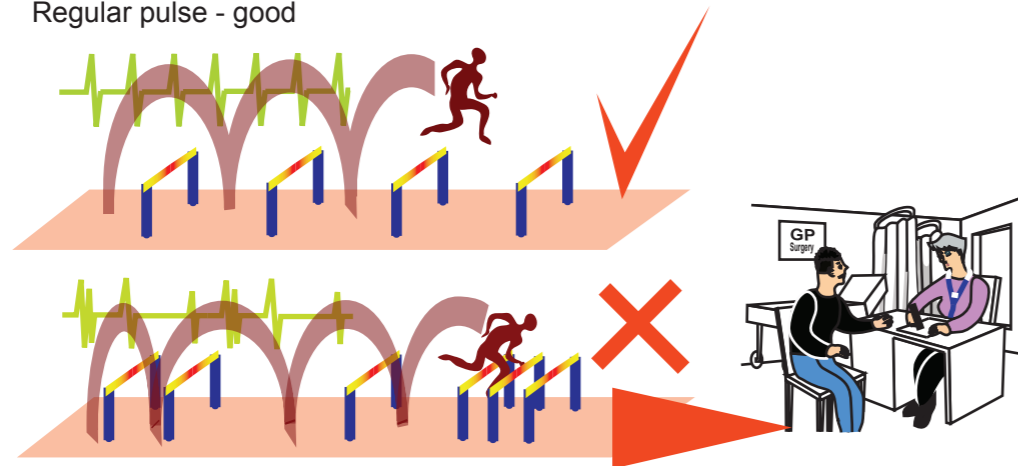


Take your **PULSE** to avoid a **STROKE**



Atrial Fibrillation (AF) is an erratic heart beat which increases the risk of having a stroke. It can be identified by taking your pulse. If your pulse feels irregular, make an appointment at your local surgery.

Regular pulse - good



Irregular pulse - needs to be checked:
make an appointment at your local surgery

'Stroke face' image supplied by Chest Heart & Stroke Scotland (CHSS). Poster design & illustration by Jeff Fallow, Graphic Designer NHS Fife

Finding Atrial Fibrillation (AF): How to take your pulse

Everyone knows that suffering a stroke can be devastating. Not everyone knows that a common cause of this is a change in the heart rhythm called atrial fibrillation (AF).

As an individual you can easily check whether you have developed this heart rhythm by regularly checking your pulse. How to do this is explained in the steps below.

Step 1

Turn your left hand palm-side up, then place the first two fingers of your right hand along the outer edge of your left wrist just below where your wrist and thumb meet.

Step 2

Slide your fingers toward the centre of your wrist. You should feel the pulse between the wrist bone and the tendon.

Step 3

Press down with your fingers until you feel your pulse. Do not press too hard, or you will not be able to feel the pulsation. Feel free to move your fingers until the pulse is easiest to feel.

Step 4

Continue to feel your pulse for a full minute. Concentrate on whether the beats are erratic, as shown on the picture on the front.

The picture on the reverse side of this leaflet describes an irregular pulse. If you think that your pulse is irregular you must contact a health professional for a further check and heart tracing if appropriate.

www.strokeheart.org