

MYTHS

VS

FACTS

# 6 MYTHS ABOUT ATRIAL FIBRILLATION



## Everyone has palpitations and fluttering

**NO!** One in four people will develop AF over the age of 64 years and this increases to 50% of people by the age of 80 years old.



## Only old people get atrial fibrillation

People in their 30's 40's and 50's can develop AF, albeit, it is far less common. The sooner AF is detected, diagnosed, and anticoagulated to prevent AF-related stroke and the AF-treated, the better the outcomes for people with AF.



## If there is no treatment, then there is nothing to worry about

There are several **treatments** including the 'pill in your pocket', regular medication, pacemakers, cardioversion, or ablation.



## MYTH 4

### All my doctor talks about is stroke, I have an issue with my heart, not my brain!

Your physician will want to reduce your risk of an AF-related stroke caused by a clot forming in your heart and traveling to your brain. Therefore an approach to do so will be the first thing your doctor (or nurse) will want to discuss with you regarding anticoagulation therapy.



## MYTH 5

### Breathlessness and exhaustion are an indicator of old age

**NO!** AF can cause you to feel breathless. The heart has four chambers that beat in rhythm. However with AF, the chambers instead of being in rhythm, quiver and prevent a steady flow of blood to pass through the heart – causing a feeling of breathlessness and palpitations.



## MYTH 6

### Blood thinners haven't stopped the palpitations or breathlessness so I don't bother taking them any more

Anticoagulation medication does not thin the blood as everyone thinks, nor does it treat the symptoms of AF. Instead, it has the important role of preventing clots from forming in the chambers of the heart due to the quivering and irregular rhythm. It is important to prevent clots as they can travel to the brain causing an AF-related stroke.

