

## Detect and protect yourself against risk of strokes – Global AF Aware Week 20-26th November

This week is Global AF (Atrial Fibrillation) Aware Week (20-26th November) and we are urging people to get a regular pulse check to help detect and protect themselves from the risk of stroke.

Atrial Fibrillation (AF) is an irregular heart beat and is a major cause of stroke. In Coventry and Warwickshire in 2015/16, the number of people registered with a GP diagnosed with AF is 15,900. However, the estimated number of people with atrial fibrillation is much higher, with 8,000 patients in need of identification, diagnosis and preventative treatment for stroke.



**AF Association Global AF Aware Week**  
**20-26 November 2017**

**Detect** AF by a simple pulse check

**Protect** against AF-related stroke using anticoagulation therapy (not aspirin)

**Correct** the irregular rhythm with access to appropriate treatment

**Perfect** the patient care pathway



If the local health services were able to identify all the patients with atrial fibrillation and optimally manage their treatment, a total of 230 strokes, could be prevented within three years. With treatment of anti-coagulation medication this can prevent two thirds of strokes in AF in Coventry and Warwickshire.

The symptoms of AF can include:

- palpitation (being aware of your heart beat)
- tiredness
- shortness of breath
- dizziness or feeling faint

However, some people only have mild symptoms, while other people have no symptoms at all.

AF can be detected by feeling the pulse at your wrist. If you are in AF, your pulse will feel irregular and beats may be variable in strength. You might also feel this pattern if you have missed beats or extra beats, which are very common and usually nothing to worry about. Some people have AF which comes and goes, so sometimes their pulse may feel normal at times and other times it will be irregular.

Know your pulse by using the British Heart Foundation [guide to checking your pulse](#).

If your pulse is irregular or if you're concerned in any way about your pulse you should make an appointment to see your GP.

**Read more about AF on [NHS Choices](#) or the [British Heart Foundation](#).**