

FAST AF



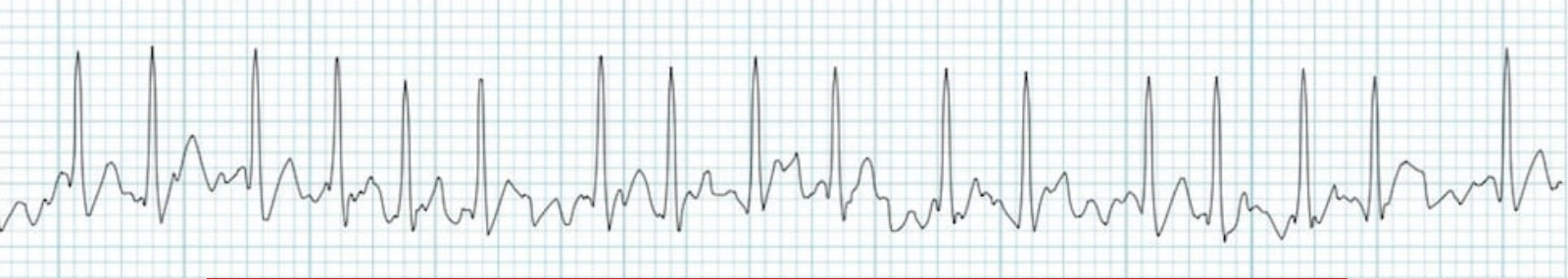
Definition

Atrial fibrillation (AF) is a supraventricular tachyarrhythmia with uncoordinated atrial electrical activation and consequently ineffective atrial contraction.

Fast AF more technically known as **AF with a rapid ventricular response**. If the ventricular response is rapid, cardiac output can become impaired due to uncoordinated myocardial contraction.

ECG Characteristics

- **No P waves**
- **Irregularly irregular**
- **Narrow-complex tachycardia (Unless bundle branch block)**



CAUSES

- **Pulmonary embolism**
- **Ischaemia**
- **Respiratory disease**
- **Atrial enlargement or myxoma**
- **Thyroid disease**
- **Ethanol**
- **Sepsis/sleep apnoea**



SYMPTOMS

Typical symptoms of new-onset AF include:

- Palpitations (e.g. a sense of fluttering in the chest)
- Dizziness
- Shortness of breath
- Anxiety
- Chest pain.

SIGNS

- An irregularly irregular pulse
- Tachycardia

TESTS

- A to E assessment
- ECG
- Bloods - FBC, U and E, CRP, TFT, Troponin.
- CXR

Haemodynamic compromise?

- pallor
- sweating
- cold clammy extremities,
- impaired consciousness,
- systolic < 90 mmHg
- pulmonary oedema
- raised JVP



DC CARDIOVERSION

Maintenance of sinus rhythm with **Amiodarone**



MANAGEMENT

RATE CONTROL

Onset > 48 hours.

- a) Beta blocker - Bisoprolol oral or IV
- b) Calcium Channel Blocker - Verapamil
- c) Digoxin - recommended in Heart Failure

RHYTHM CONTROL

Onset clearly determined < 48 hours

1. Flecainide - structurally normal heart (echocardiogram must be performed)
2. Amiodarone

SUPPORTIVE TREATMENT

- Anti-coagulate - Enoxaparin 1mg/kg
- Fluids
- Treat underlying cause eg. infection with antibiotics.

