New-Onset Atrial Fibrillation During Hospitalization Likely to Recur

Patients who experienced new-onset atrial fibrillation while hospitalized for noncardiac surgery or medical illness were more likely to experience recurrent bouts of the common arrhythmia during the year after being discharged than were matched control participants without the condition, according to results involving 278 participants from 3 Canadian hospitals.

About a third of participants who had atrial fibrillation while hospitalized experienced additional episodes compared with about 5% of participants without the condition. After adjusting for clinical differences between participants, hospitalized participants who experienced atrial fibrillation were 6.6 times as likely to have a recurrence compared with hospitalized patients who did not have new-onset atrial fibrillation.

Future studies should evaluate whether oral anticoagulation therapy might reduce stroke risk in hospitalized patients with new-onset atrial fibrillation, the researchers wrote in Annals of Internal Medicine.

Emily Harris

Published Online: October 18, 2023.

Note: Source references are available through embedded hyperlinks in the article text online.