The Importance of Raising Awareness for Atrial Fibrillation

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What You Can Do to Raise Awareness

Atrial Fibrillation (AFib) is more common than many like to believe. More than 2.5 million people in the U.S. alone have AFib, and the condition accounts for as many as one-third of cardiac rhythm related hospitalizations.

The prevalence of the disease is on the rise – the number of people diagnosed is expected to double in the next 30-40 years. A is a serious heart issue; however, it is a treatable. That is one of the reasons why there needs to be an increased awareness about atrial fibrillation.

Why Increase AFib Awareness?

Awareness of atrial fibrillation is required to:

- **Ensure that it AFib cases are diagnosed and treated in a timely manner.** Patients and their families need to be empowered to manage AFib, and having access to the right information goes a long way. Knowing the signs and symptoms of AFib means people can seek medical treatment as soon as possible.
- **Patients are educated and proactive about their condition.** The information provided to patients and families should entail the latest in the news and pertinent education.
- **Help patients find the best physicians available to treat them.**
- **Improve care and decrease the likelihood of strokes.** Doctors need to be educated as well, so care is improved and fewer AFib patients suffer strokes and hospitalizations. The right care has to be given to AFib patients by healthcare providers who specialize in the condition.
- **Ease financial burden.** Another important point, which groups like StopAFib.org promote, is easing the financial burden of AFib. This cost is heavy on patients and their families, as well as society as a whole.

How Can Awareness Be Increased?

StopAFib.org is very involved in raising awareness, but it requires many volunteers to reach as many people as possible. The organization has started the wheels turning in making September the official month for National Atrial Fibrillation Awareness Month in the U.S. It has been joined by many medical and patient organizations so that it can elevate its importance to the U.S. Congress.

StopAFib.org has an alliance with many organizations to raise awareness, in general. One project launched in 2009 was AF Stat: A Call to Action for Atrial Fibrillation. It is a national effort to help bring awareness to the country.

Additionally, a YouTube channel has been developed by the organization to “bring doctors to patients," and there are interviews for patients to view. The world’s leading AFib specialists are guests on these videos, and they present vital information about the latest findings in their research. This information is reflective of what is presented at renowned medical conferences. Patients can share this knowledge with their cardiologists or

physicians who oversee their AFib care planning.

Check out StopAFib.org's website for information on starting awareness projects in your community. You can get involved in raising AFib awareness independently, too, by holding seminars for AFib patients to educate them about the disease. You could also send information pamphlets out in your community, or start a blog about your AFib journey. There are so many possibilities.

No matter how you contribute, you will be helping someone with AFib.