

4WARD CONVERSATION CARDS OVERVIEW

Please find educational materials to facilitate shared decision making between you and your atrial fibrillation (AFib) patients. More information can be found at AFib4WARD.com.

CARD 1: What is AFib and how does it relate to stroke? – Talk to your patient about their condition and its connection to stroke.

CARD 2: Understanding your risk of stroke – Help your patient understand their risk of stroke using the CHA₂DS₂-VASc stroke risk tool.

- For patients who are candidates for anticoagulation, consider a full benefit and risk discussion (HAS-BLED score).

CARD 3: How do I lower my risk of stroke? – Help your patients understand their treatment options.

CARD 4: Staying on your medications – Help your patients understand the importance of medication adherence.

TAKE-HOME MATERIAL – Patient resources can be downloaded at AFib4WARD.com.

What is AFib and how does it relate to stroke?

Atrial fibrillation, or **AFib**, is an abnormal heartbeat that occurs when the top chambers of the heart do not beat in a coordinated manner.

How can AFib lead to a stroke?

AFib may allow blood to pool in your heart, which may cause blood clots to form. If a clot leaves your heart, it can block an artery in your brain and cause a stroke.

What is the impact of a stroke?

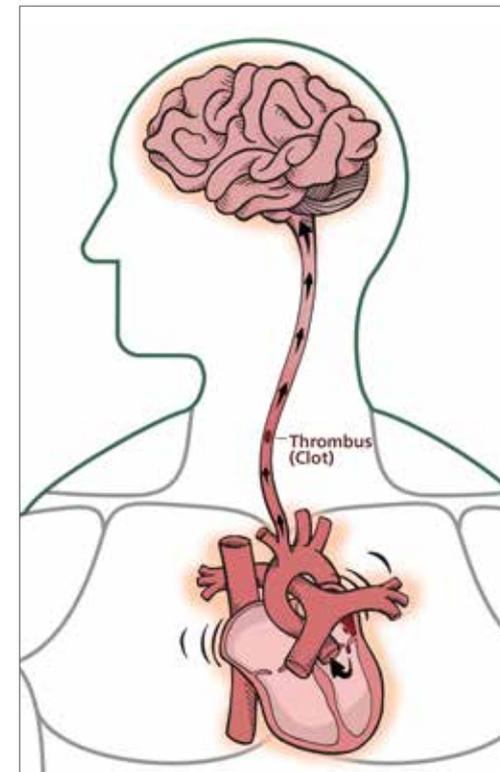
A stroke can be very serious. More U.S. adults are disabled by stroke than by any other cause. A stroke may make it hard for you to move, talk, or think. It can even kill you – **every 4 minutes someone experiences a stroke.**

AFIB MAKES YOU
5X MORE LIKELY
TO HAVE A STROKE

Talk to
your doctor



about how **4 out of 5** strokes could be **prevented**



Understanding your risk of stroke

When you have AFib, you are 5X more likely than someone without AFib to have a stroke. One way to reduce stroke risk is by taking blood thinners (anticoagulants). Leaving AFib untreated may increase risk of stroke. **The CHA₂DS₂-VASc (Congestive heart failure, Hypertension, Age over 75, Diabetes, Stroke, Vascular disease, Age over 65, Sex) scale helps estimate your risk of stroke.** Calculate your score to help you and your Healthcare Provider discuss whether you are a candidate for treatment with blood thinners.

CHA₂DS₂-VASc RISK FACTORS To assess patient risk, mark each box that applies. Add up the total number to determine patient stroke risk score below.

CHF/LVD
(congestive heart failure or left ventricular dysfunction)

High blood pressure
(hypertension)

Age 75+
This increases your risk by two numbers

Diabetes

Stroke/Thromboembolism History/TIA
(transient ischemic attack)
This increases your risk by two numbers

Vascular disease
PAD (peripheral artery disease), aortic plaque, or heart attack

Age 65-74

Female

STROKE RISK SCALE

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

LOW RISK
<1% per year

MODERATE RISK
1% per year

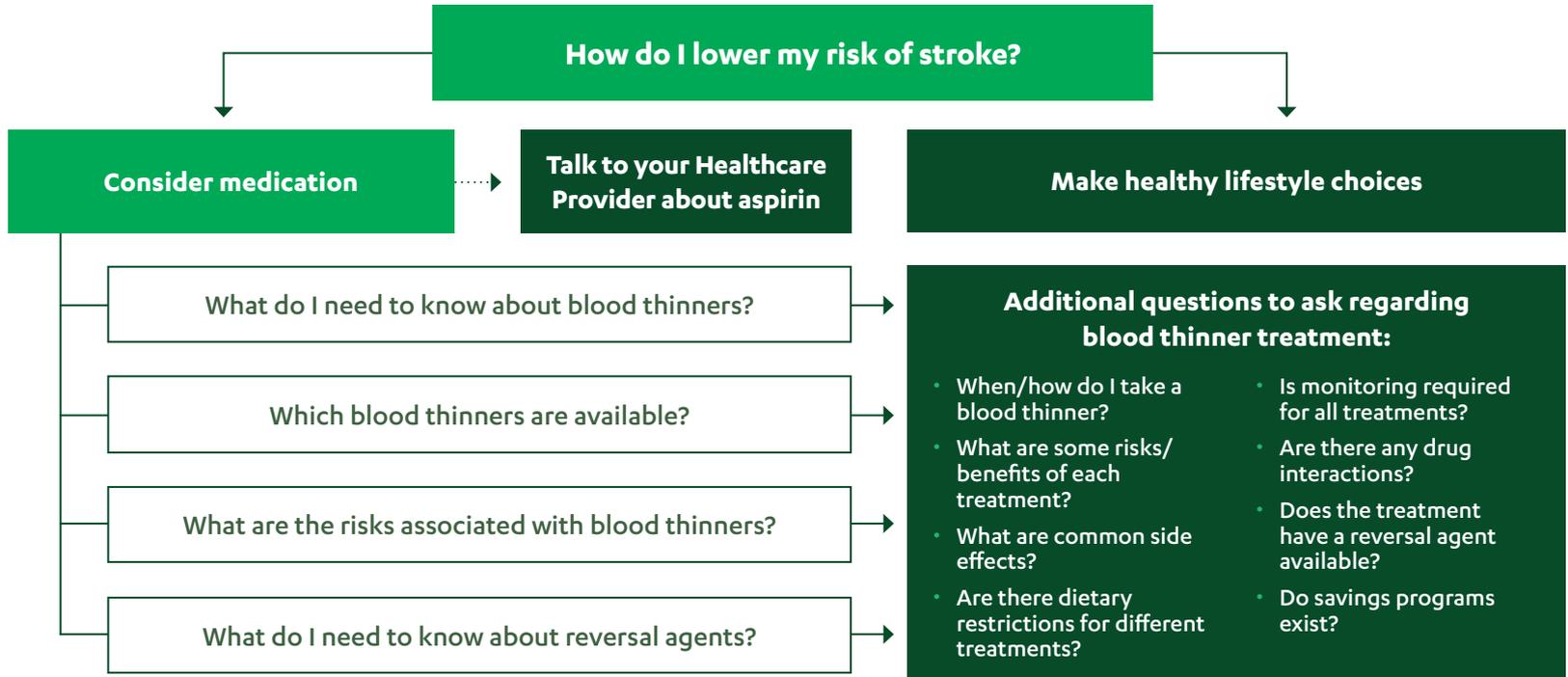
HIGH RISK
2-15% per year

The purpose of this tool is to begin the discussion about stroke risk with your Healthcare Provider. Use your risk factor score to start the conversation with your Healthcare Provider. Ask about treatment with blood thinners to reduce the risk of stroke.

Visit AFib4WARD.com for more information.

How do I lower my risk of stroke?

Guide a conversation with your Healthcare Provider about how you can lower your risk of stroke using the discussion guide below.



Staying on your medications

Once you begin a medication, it is important to stay on it. Don't stop taking a prescribed medication without talking to your Healthcare Provider first.

When taking a blood thinner, you might not feel any different, but the benefits of treatment are not something you can feel. Continuing your medicine as prescribed greatly reduces your risk of stroke.

Blood thinners are associated with an increased risk of bleeding. Factors linked to increased bleed risk include older age, high blood pressure, and predisposition to bleeding. If you have signs of a bleed such as abnormal bruising, discolored stool or urine, or unusual bleeding, talk to your Healthcare Provider or visit the emergency room as soon as possible.

Medications called reversal agents are available for some blood thinner treatments. In an emergency, a reversal agent could be used to allow your blood to clot normally again. It is important to know the name of the blood thinner you are taking and whether a reversal agent is available.

Medication reminders – If you have trouble remembering to take your medicine, here are some helpful tips:



Take your medication at the **same time(s)** each day.



Use an **alarm** or reminder on your phone.



Use your **daily routines** as a reminder – for instance, when having your morning coffee or before walking the dog.



Ask **someone** to help you remember.

Visit [AFib4WARD.com](https://www.AFib4WARD.com) for more information.