

Stroke Prevention In AF - Guidelines for Medical Professionals

The need for warfarin should be considered in all AF patients. Scoring systems or flow charts are used to assess whether warfarin, aspirin or nothing is needed as a blood thinning treatment.

Patients who have, for example:

- mechanical heart valves
- mitral valve stenosis (narrowing)
- aneurysm of the left ventricle

Need treatment with warfarin independent of the presence of AF.

Other patients are scored according to whether they have:

- diabetes: 1 point
- heart failure: 1 point
- age 75 years or more: 1 point
- treated high blood pressure: 1 point
- Previous stroke/TIA: 2 points

Patients with a score of 2 or more need warfarin.

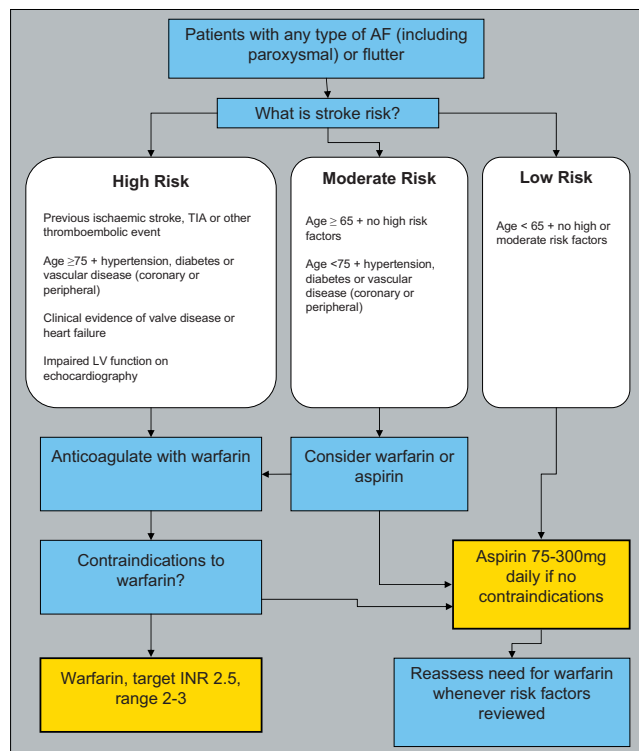
Patients with a score of 1 should be further assessed:

- coronary artery disease
- aged 65 to 74
- female gender
- history of thyroid overactivity

Patients with a score of 1 plus one or more of these other factors probably need warfarin, others need aspirin.

Patients with a score of 0 do not need warfarin but may need aspirin if these other factors are present (see above).

Instead of using this scoring system a flow chart (such as that below) can be followed.



Adapted from National Collaborating Centre for Chronic Conditions. *Atrial fibrillation: national clinical guideline for management in primary and secondary care*. London: Royal College of Physicians, 2006

Author: Professor A John Camm, EP
 Endorsed by: Dr Matthew Fay, GP
 Mrs Jayne Mudd, Arrhythmia Nurse Specialist
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