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Headline: Woman's heart rhythm disorder not detected until 20 years

later



## Summary of article:

Mdm Luar Ah Looi, 68 years old, had symptoms of atrial fibrillation (AF) when she was 40+ years old. However her heart rhythm disorder was not detected for more than 20 years, despite having taken electrocardiography tests. It was only detected about a year ago when Dr. Reginald Liew, a Senior Consultant Cardiologist at Mount Elizabeth Hospital diagnosed her disorder. She has since been fitted with a pacemaker and henceforth, her years of chest discomfort she experienced went away. Mdm Luar shares that she usually feels heart palpitations whenever she is tired. Other symptoms she has experienced include breathlessness and feeling faint. Dr Liew said that some patients do not have any symptoms and do not even know they have AF.

## Patients with AF have an increased risk of stroke by up to 8 times

The Singapore Heart Foundation organized the first 'Heart Rhythm Week' in Singapore to raise awareness about AF. 16 Guardian pharmacies will be offering pre-screening services. This service is open to the public and it is free of charge. Dr Goh Ping Ping, board member of the Singapore Heart Foundation shared that there are around 50,000 people in Singapore with AF and that it increases their risk of a stroke by up to 8 times. With early detection and treatment, it will lower the risks of having a stroke.

Dr Liew also shared that 6% of people age above 60 years old have AF, while there are about 10% of those age above 80 years old who have AF. Some risk factors of AF include alcohol consumption, thyroid disease, cardiovascular diseases and many other illnesses. There are also more males than females with AF.