

♥ HEART HEALTH

Atrial Fibrillation: What Everyone Should Know

(NAPSA)—There's encouraging news for the estimated two million Americans affected by atrial fibrillation (AF), a serious heart condition. A new form of treatment has been submitted for review by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

An estimated 160,000 new cases of AF are diagnosed in the United States each year. The condition is characterized by the irregular and very uncomfortable beating of the heart's atrial (upper) chambers, and results when the normal electrical conduction system of the atria malfunctions, leading to irregular and chaotic beating of the heart.

During AF, the regular pumping action of the atria is replaced by very fast, irregular, disorganized and quivering heart beats, which result in the failure of the atria to fill the ventricles completely and, consequently, the failure of the heart to pump adequate amounts of oxygenated blood throughout the body. These spasms may lead to reduced blood flow, blood clot formation, stroke and even death. Symptoms of AF typically include a rapid and irregular heartbeat, palpitations, discomfort and dizziness.

The incidence of AF increases with age, and the "graying" of the U.S. population likely means a larger number of cases will be diagnosed over the next decade. Fortunately, about half of AF cases are considered treatable.

The new AF therapy is a minimally invasive, single-use system



Researchers are investigating a new treatment option for a common, but serious heart condition.

that has the potential to cure AF. The linear ablation system, called REVELATION® Tx, was developed by Cardima, Inc.

"We believe the REVELATION Tx could represent a new standard of care for treating this disease," says Gabriel Vegh, chief executive officer of Cardima. "If approved, electrophysiologists would have the first FDA-approved, minimally invasive liner ablation device for treating AF patients."

Hugh Calkins, MD, professor of medicine and director of electrophysiology services at Johns Hopkins University, has long noted the need for an atrial catheter to treat AF. There have been many attempts to make such a device but, notes Calkins, "the only one still standing right now is the Cardima REVELATION."

To learn more, visit the Web site at www.cardima.com.