

Evaluating Atrial Fibrillation Perceptions Among the General Population in Saudi Arabia

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ABSTRACT

Heart diseases are common and spread among people all over the world. This article aims to evaluate atrial fibrillation (AF) perceptions among the general population in Saudi Arabia. This is an online cross-sectional survey study that was conducted in Saudi Arabia in June and July 2025. The convenience sampling technique was employed to invite the population to participate in the study. This research utilized a previously validated questionnaire, the Atrial Fibrillation Knowledge Assessment. A multiple logistic regression was performed to assess the factors associated with better knowledge. A total of 695 participants were included in the study. Most participants demonstrated good knowledge regarding AF. A large proportion correctly recognized that AF may cause blood clots in the heart (81.6%), increase the risk of stroke (84.6%), and that episodes may recur (90.4%). A total of 87.9% acknowledged that early diagnosis and treatment can prevent stroke, and 82.0% knew AF can be treated with medications. Some misconceptions were evident; for example, 54.7% incorrectly believed that AF is a condition where the heart beats slower than normal, and 33.7% thought it can only be treated with surgery. Participants aged 55-64 years had significantly higher odds of knowledge compared to the 18-24 group (odds ratio (OR) = 20.50, 95% confidence interval (CI): 5.81–72.38, $p < 0.001$). Those residing in the middle region were also more likely to have higher knowledge (OR = 2.94, 95% CI: 1.43–6.01, $p = 0.003$). Students showed increased odds compared to the unemployed group (OR = 1.94, 95% CI: 1.04–3.65, $p = 0.038$). Moreover, participants who had heard of atrial fibrillation were more knowledgeable (OR = 3.47, 95% CI: 2.36–5.10, $p < 0.001$). The results of our study revealed that we need more spreading of knowledge among people especially those who were younger or unemployed. In contrast to many previous studies, the knowledge among our sample was significantly high, as many of them had a good knowledge and understanding of AF complications. According to therapy approaches, there are misconceptions related to this topic. Therefore, as a result, awareness and knowledge must be developed to ensure that all patients receive the appropriate information related to AF.

Keywords: Atrial Fibrillation; Perception; Public; Saudi Arabia; Understanding

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