

# Management of Stroke Prevention in Atrial Fibrillation (SPAF)

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Stroke prevention is an important aspect in the overall management of atrial fibrillation (AF). Anticoagulants have an important role in the prevention of stroke in AF. With the availability of both options, vitamin K antagonists (VKAs) and newer oral anticoagulants (NOACs), it is important to make the right choice for better clinical outcomes of safety as well as efficacy. In order to provide practice guidance, "The Indian consensus guidance on stroke prevention in atrial fibrillation: An emphasis on practical use of non-vitamin K oral anticoagulants" was published in 2015 in the Indian Heart Journal.<sup>1</sup> The consensus document was well accepted by the healthcare practitioners in India as indicated by number of downloads of the article within 3 months of the publication and thereafter.

Use of anticoagulants is an evolving area; several newer studies and updates on this topic have been published across the world, including from India, since the publication of the Indian consensus document 3 years ago. Bleeding associated with oral anticoagulants (OACs) and its management has always been one of the major concerns in

SPAF. Development and availability of specific reversal agents for the NOACs is a significant advantage today. Idarucizumab, a specific reversal agent for dabigatran is now also available in India. With availability of reversal agent, it is imperative to understand the recommendations for its use and provide consensus on use of these reversal agents in Indian setting. Similarly, an overall guidance for the management of bleeding with OACs is also essential. The results of the Indian Heart Rhythm Society-Atrial Fibrillation registry involving 1537 patients with AF have also been recently published in the Indian Heart Journal<sup>2</sup>. The results of the registry show some differences when compared with western world data. With this background, there was a need to review the recently published literature related to SPAF and update the consensus statement to provide the latest recommendations for management in Indian patients.

We have also included guidance for the management of patients with

rheumatic valvular heart disease, a problem rarely seen in the western world. Importantly, the document provides details about different reversal agents, their stages of development and results of studies where ever available. The other important updates relate to the management of acute coronary syndrome, percutaneous coronary intervention, cardioversion and radio frequency ablation in patients with AF on NOACs. Initiation and management of anticoagulation after ischemic stroke or intracranial haemorrhage, has also been highlighted. This updated consensus document should provide guidance to all specialities that are involved in the management of AF.

## References

1. Dalal J, Bhav A, Oomman A, et al. The Indian consensus guidance on stroke prevention in atrial fibrillation: An emphasis on practical use of nonvitamin K oral anticoagulants. *Indian Heart J* 2015; 67 (Suppl 2): S13-S34.
2. Vora A, Kapoor A, Nair M, et al. Clinical presentation, management, and outcomes in the Indian Heart Rhythm Society-Atrial Fibrillation (IHRS-AF) registry. *Indian Heart J* 2017; 69:43-47.

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