

Blood flows through your heart and lungs in four steps:

1. The right atrium receives oxygen-poor blood from the body and pumps it to the right ventricle through the tricuspid valve.
2. The right ventricle pumps the oxygen-poor blood to the lungs through the pulmonary valve.
3. The left atrium receives oxygen-rich blood from the lungs and pumps it to the left ventricle through the mitral valve.
4. The left ventricle pumps the oxygen-rich blood through the aortic valve out to the rest of the body.

The left and right atria are smaller chambers that pump blood into the ventricles. The left and right ventricles are stronger pumps. The left ventricle is the strongest because it has to pump blood out to the entire body. When your heart functions normally, all four chambers work together in a continuous and coordinated effort to keep oxygen-rich blood circulating throughout your body. Your heart has its own electrical system that coordinates the work of the heart chambers (heart rhythm) and also controls the frequency of beats (heart rate). ¹

Atrial Fibrillation (aka A-Fib):

This is a heart condition which occurs when the pacemaker role of the atrium beats abnormally fast overriding the normal conduction pathways to the ventricle

If you feel a “flutter” in your chest, and it is hard to count your pulse, a doctors visit is necessary. Other symptoms may include shortness of breath, weakness and fatigue.

This condition can be controlled with medication, and if meds are unsuccessful there is a procedure called “cardioversion”, which “shocks” the heart to its normal rate and rhythm. These feelings should not be ignored as it increases the risk of stroke and heart disease.

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