

About the Society

The Heart Rhythm Society (HRS) is the international leader in science, education, and advocacy for cardiac arrhythmia professionals and patients, and the primary information resource on heart rhythm disorders. Its mission is to improve the care of patients by promoting research, education, and optimal health care policies and standards.

Formerly known as the North American Society for Pacing and Electrophysiology (NASPE), the Society was founded in 1979 to address the scarcity of information about the diagnosis and treatment of cardiac arrhythmias. HRS is now the preeminent professional group representing more than 5,600 specialists in cardiac pacing and electrophysiology from more than 70 countries.

Through research and advocacy, HRS aims to:

- Support excellence in research and education by disseminating findings to the international electrophysiology community and providing the tools to deliver new therapies to patients worldwide.
- Advocate for optimal health care policies and standards by providing leadership on key issues and testifying before decision-making groups in Washington, D.C.
- Help providers deliver the best care by enhancing the patient-provider relationship and informing the public to seek out appropriate and often life-saving care.

HRS is the largest advocate for heart rhythm disorders research and provides training for cardiac arrhythmia experts around the world. The Society is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) to sponsor continuing medical education for physicians.

Raising Awareness

HRS embarked upon a long-term, comprehensive and coordinated effort to address three key disease states:

- Sudden Cardiac Arrest
- Atrial Fibrillation
- Heart Failure

To raise the public's understanding of heart rhythm disorders, the Society launched three national awareness campaigns:

Sudden Cardiac Arrest (SCA) Awareness Campaign

More than 350,000 deaths occur each year as a result of SCA. In fact, SCA claims one life every two minutes, taking more lives each year than breast cancer, lung cancer or AIDS.

To decrease the death toll from SCA, HRS launched its SCA ["Apples and Oranges" Awareness Campaign](#) in October 2009 to help the public become more familiar with what SCA is, the differences between SCA and a heart attack (electrical vs. plumbing), how it affects people and what can be done to help save lives. The Society is committed to a long-term approach through this campaign to educate the public and ultimately decrease the number of lives claimed by SCA each year.

A survey commissioned by HRS in 2012 showed that Americans' understanding of the difference between SCA and heart attack increased 5 percent. The Society is committed to further increasing the public's knowledge of SCA with the goal of saving more lives.

In 2013, HRS increased their efforts in this campaign by generating attention to the need for more public education and greater awareness of SCA. All SCA resources were made available via online platforms, with users having the opportunity to download materials from HRSONline.org

Atrial Fibrillation (AF) Awareness Campaign

More than 2 million people in the United States live with AF, and approximately 160,000 new cases are diagnosed each year. As the population of the U.S. and other countries ages, projections show that more than 5.6 million adults in the next 40 years will be diagnosed with AF. Currently, AF accounts for approximately one-third of hospitalizations for cardiac rhythm disturbances in the U.S. and increases the risk of stroke fivefold.

To combat the harmful effects of AF, HRS launched the "[Afib Feels Like](#)" Awareness Campaign in 2011 to call attention to the need for more public education and greater awareness of AF, including research, symptoms, warning signs and treatment options available to patients.

The "Afib Feels Likes" campaign, now in its third year, continues to serve as the springboard for these discussions with our members, patients and the general public.

Contact Information:

Contact the Heart Rhythm Society at (202) 464-3400 or visit www.HRSOnline.org to find additional press materials and information for both patients and medical professionals, including a heart rhythm specialist search engine; position statements on current heart rhythm issues; and patient information about cardiac arrhythmias and other heart rhythm disorders.

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