



## Blinded Randomized trial of Anticoagulation to prevent Ischemic stroke and Neurocognitive impairment in Atrial Fibrillation

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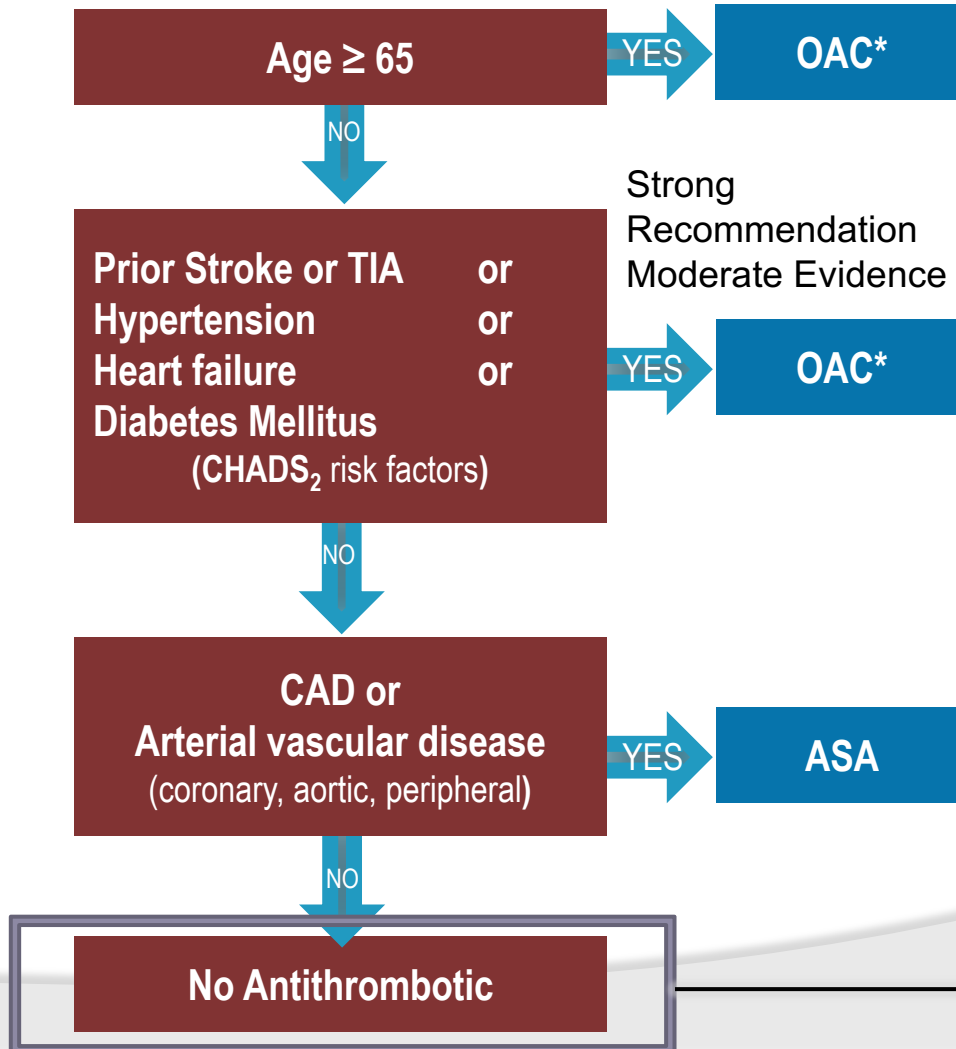
A Division of the Montreal Heart Institute



# Stroke Prevention - Therapy



## The CCS Algorithm



## Who is this group?

### ● CHADS 0

- 20-40% of AF
- 46% of those with AF <65y

### ● CHADSVASC 0

- 7-22% of AF

- Risk of stroke is low but not negligible

(i.e., **0.5% to 1% per year**)

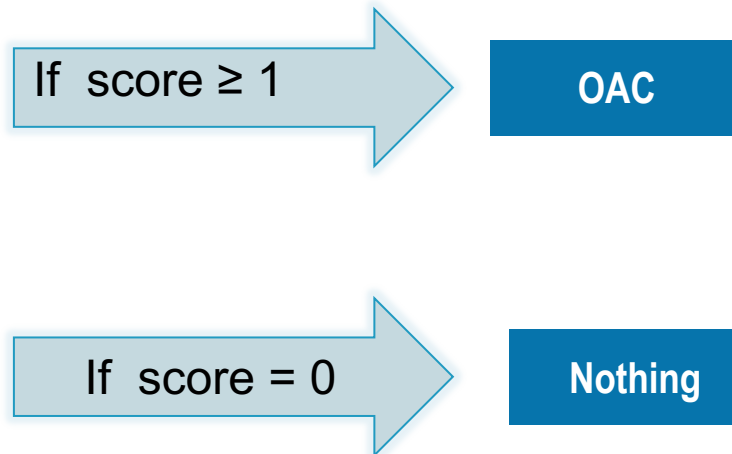
# Stroke Prevention - Therapy



CHA<sub>2</sub>DS<sub>2</sub>-VASc

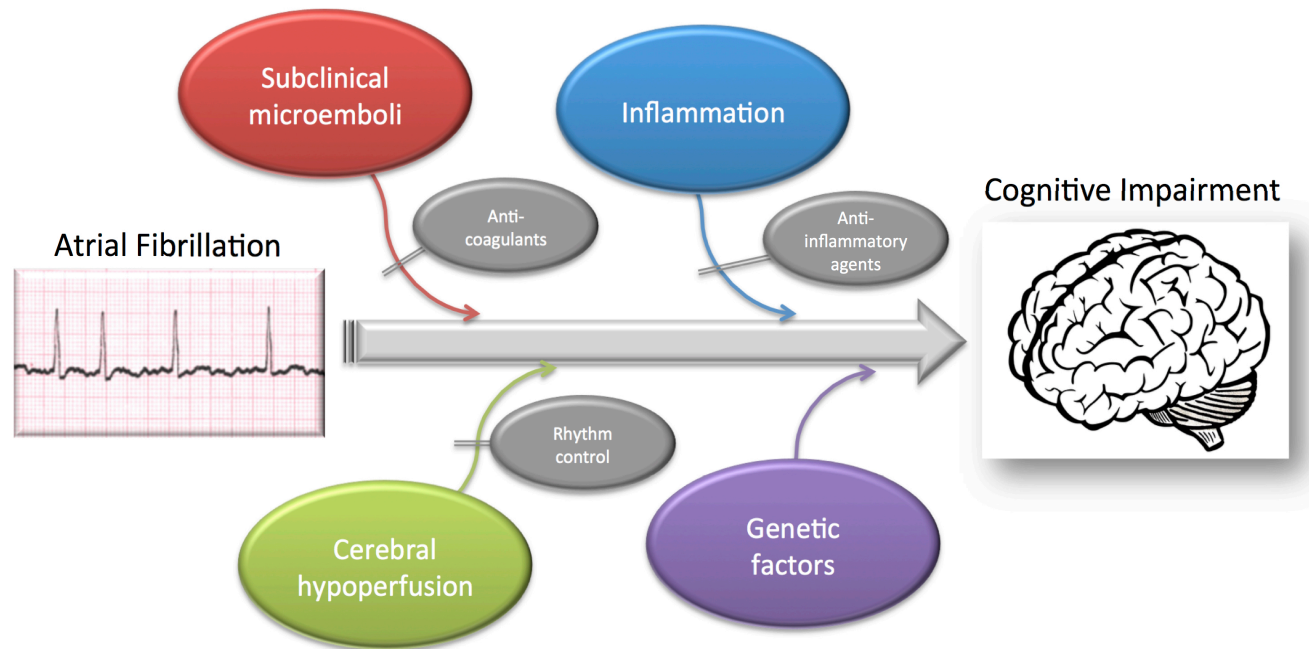
Risk Factor	Score
Congestive Heart Failure	1
Hypertension	1
Age ≥ 75	2
Diabetes Mellitus	1
Stroke/TIA/Thrombo-embolism	2
Vascular Disease	1
Age 65-74	1
Female	1
Maximum Score	9

C statistic = 0.61



CCS Guidelines 2014 *"The greater safety of NOACs might alter the risk-benefit calculation for OAC use further (i.e. < 65 y) but data to allow this are presently insufficient".*

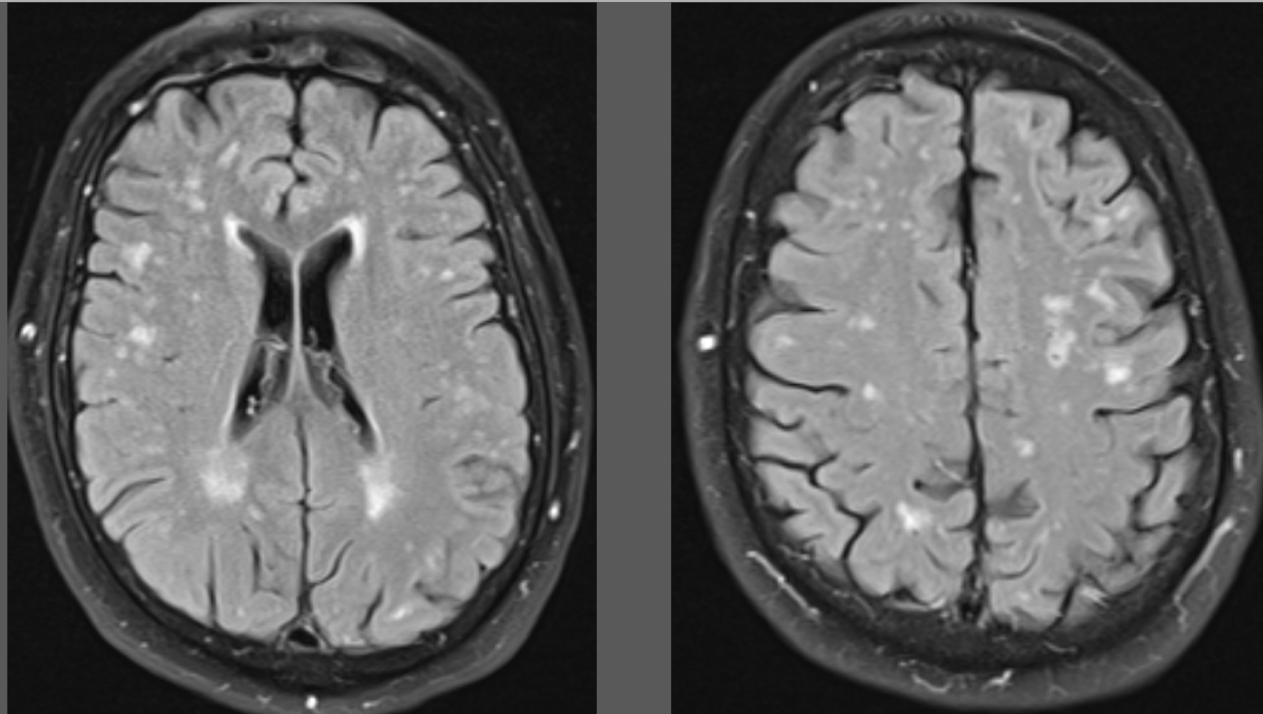
- Positive association between AF and cognitive impairment/dementia
- Microembolism is the main suspected mechanism



Rivard L, Khairy P . **Mechanisms, Clinical Significance and Prevention of Cognitive Impairment in Atrial Fibrillation**  
*Canadian Journal of Cardiology (in press)*

# In patients with AF, silent cerebral ischemia is an important cause of cognitive impairment

59 year-old man with PAF, **CHA<sub>2</sub>DS<sub>2</sub>-VASc 0**, and mild cognitive impairment

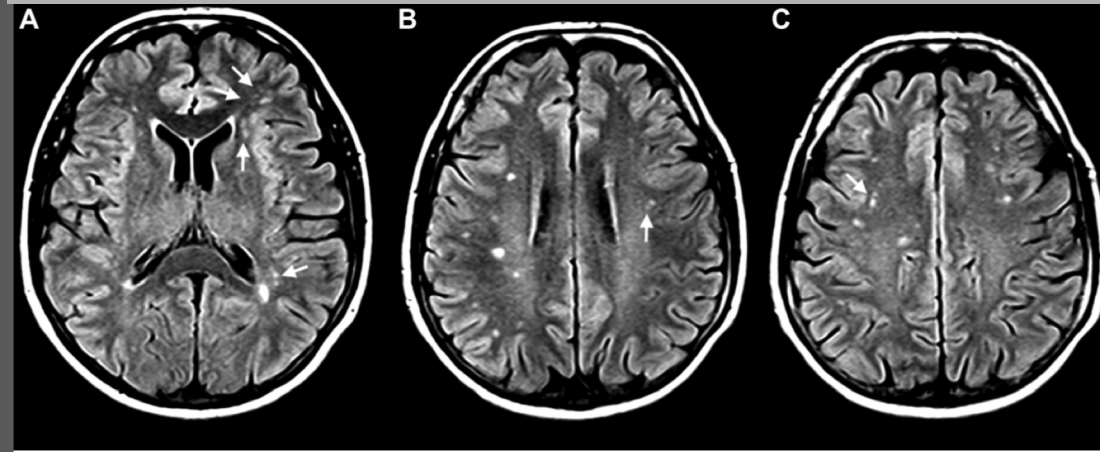


# Prevalence of Silent Cerebral Ischemia in Paroxysmal and Persistent Atrial Fibrillation and Correlation With Cognitive Function

*Galta et al. JACC 2013*

- 180 AF patients (60.5% with  $\text{CHA}_2\text{DS}_2\text{VASc}$  0/1) and 90 controls in SR, balanced for age, sex, risk factors, and education level

55-year-old man, with PAF and  $\text{CHA}_2\text{DS}_2\text{-Vasc}$  0



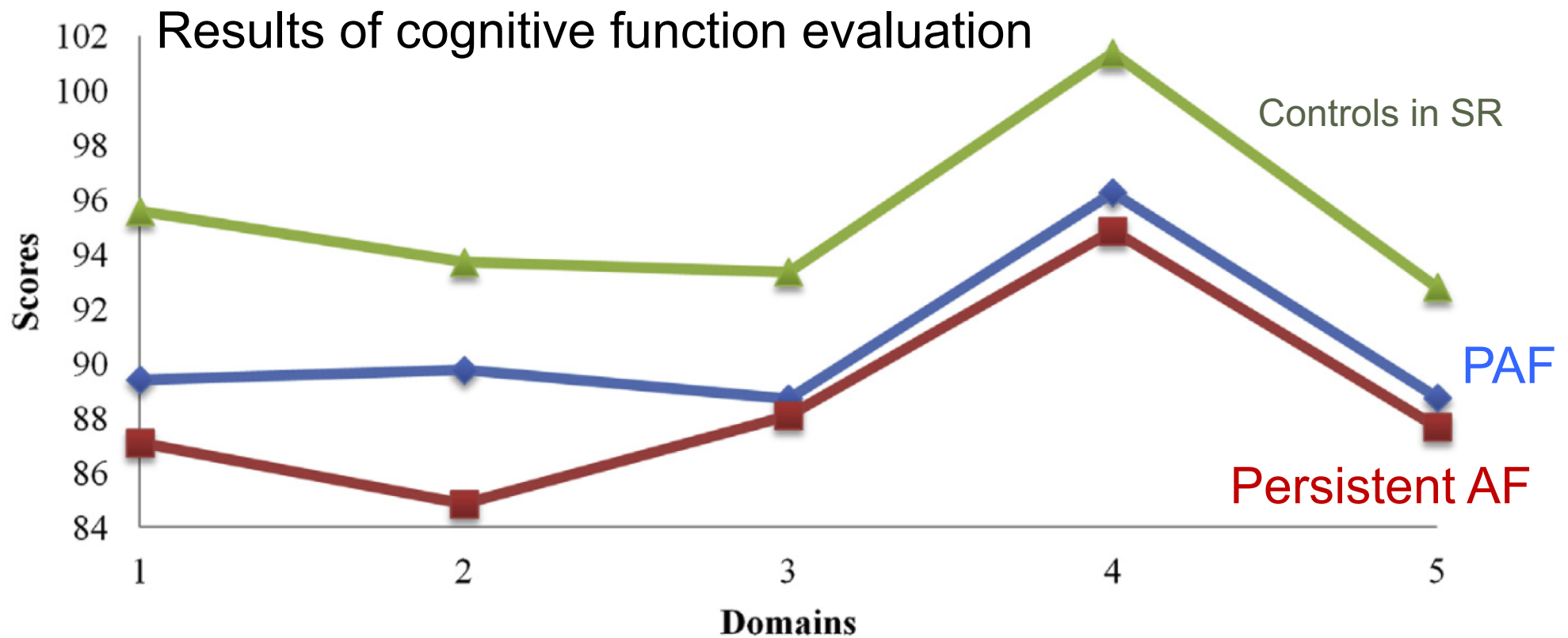
# Prevalence of Silent Cerebral Ischemia in Paroxysmal and Persistent Atrial Fibrillation and Correlation With Cognitive Function



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- Patients with AF had a higher prevalence of silent cerebral ischemia (SCI) and a worse cognitive performance compared to patients in sinus rhythm (SR) (odds ratio [OR], 11.2; 95% CI 6 to 21;  $P<0.01$ ).
- Number of areas of SCI/pt was significantly higher in patients with AF than in controls ( $12.0\pm 26.7$ ; paroxysmal vs. controls and persistent vs. controls,  $P<0.01$ ).



	Controls (N = 90)	PRX AF (N = 90)	PER AF (N = 90)	p PRX / controls	p PER / controls	p PRX/ PER
Domains	92.4 ± 15.4	86.2 ± 13.8	82.9 ± 11.5	< 0.01	< 0.01	0.08
1-Immediate Memory	95.6 ± 17.5	89.9 ± 14.7	87.1 ± 16.9	0.02	< 0.01	0.24
2-Visuo-spatial abilities	93.8 ± 16.7	89.9 ± 18.2	84.8 ± 14.8	0.14	< 0.01	0.04
3-Language	92.9 ± 11.4	88.8 ± 9.1	88.1 ± 8.7	< 0.01	< 0.01	0.59
4-Attention	101.4 ± 21.2	96.6 ± 16.6	94.9 ± 15.6	0.09	0.02	0.47
5-Delayed memory	93.5 ± 11.7	88.7 ± 14.7	87.7 ± 14	0.02	< 0.01	0.64

# Atrial fibrillation, cognitive impairment, and neuroimaging

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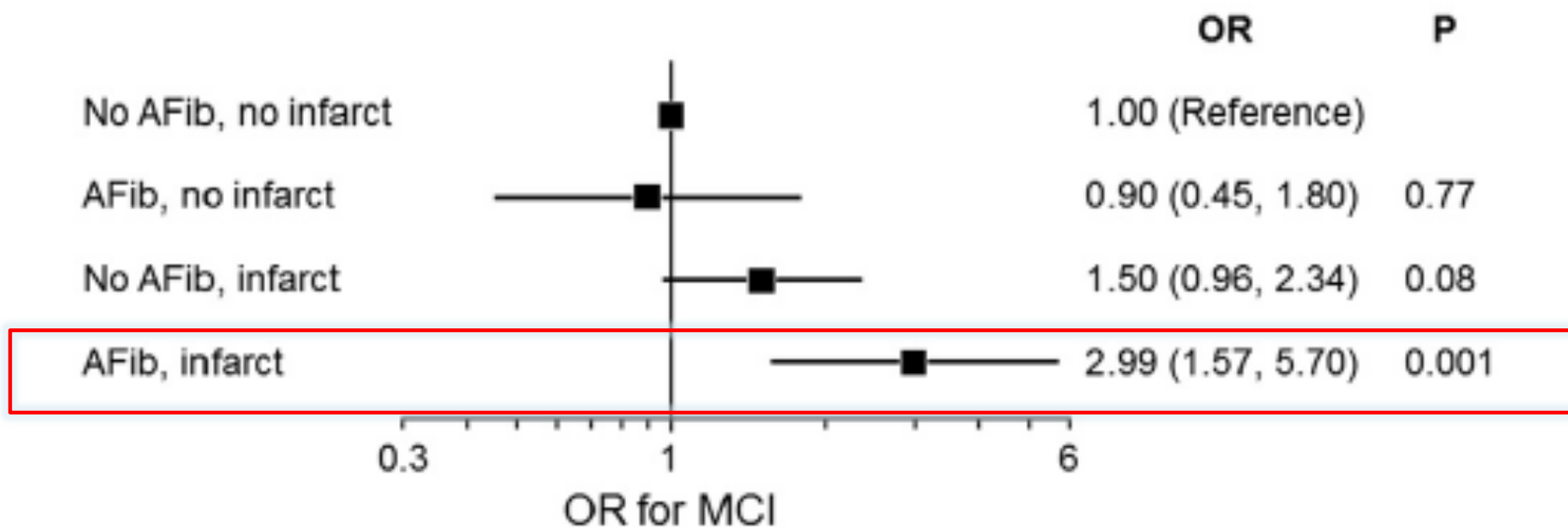
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Azheimer's & Dementia 2016

- Pts from the Mayo Clinic Study of Aging were invited to participate in the trial
- Cerebral MRI and cognitive testing (by a neuropsychometrist) in 1044 pts (141 with AF)

## Interaction Between AFib Infarction and MCI



Patients with both AF and silent cerebral ischemia are more likely to suffer from MCI

# Study Hypothesis



- ◎ **Pathophysiological hypothesis:** In patients with AF, silent cerebral microemboli are an important cause of cognitive impairment

# Inclusion Criteria



- ◎ 30-62 years at consent
- ◎ Low risk of stroke
- ◎ Documentation of AF within the prior 18 months
  - ECG, intracardiac electrogram, or pacemaker/implantable cardioverter-defibrillator

# Exclusion Criteria



1. Known diagnosis of dementia;
2. Valvular AF (clinically significant) or hypertrophic cardiomyopathy;
3. Other indication for antiplatelet therapy or anticoagulation;
4. Conditions associated with an increased risk of bleeding;
5. History of gastro-intestinal bleeding;
6. Reversible cause of AF (e.g. cardiac surgery, pulmonary embolism, untreated hyperthyroidism);
7. Planned pulmonary vein ablation or surgery for treatment of AF;
8. Absence of AF recurrence  $\geq 3$  months post ablation

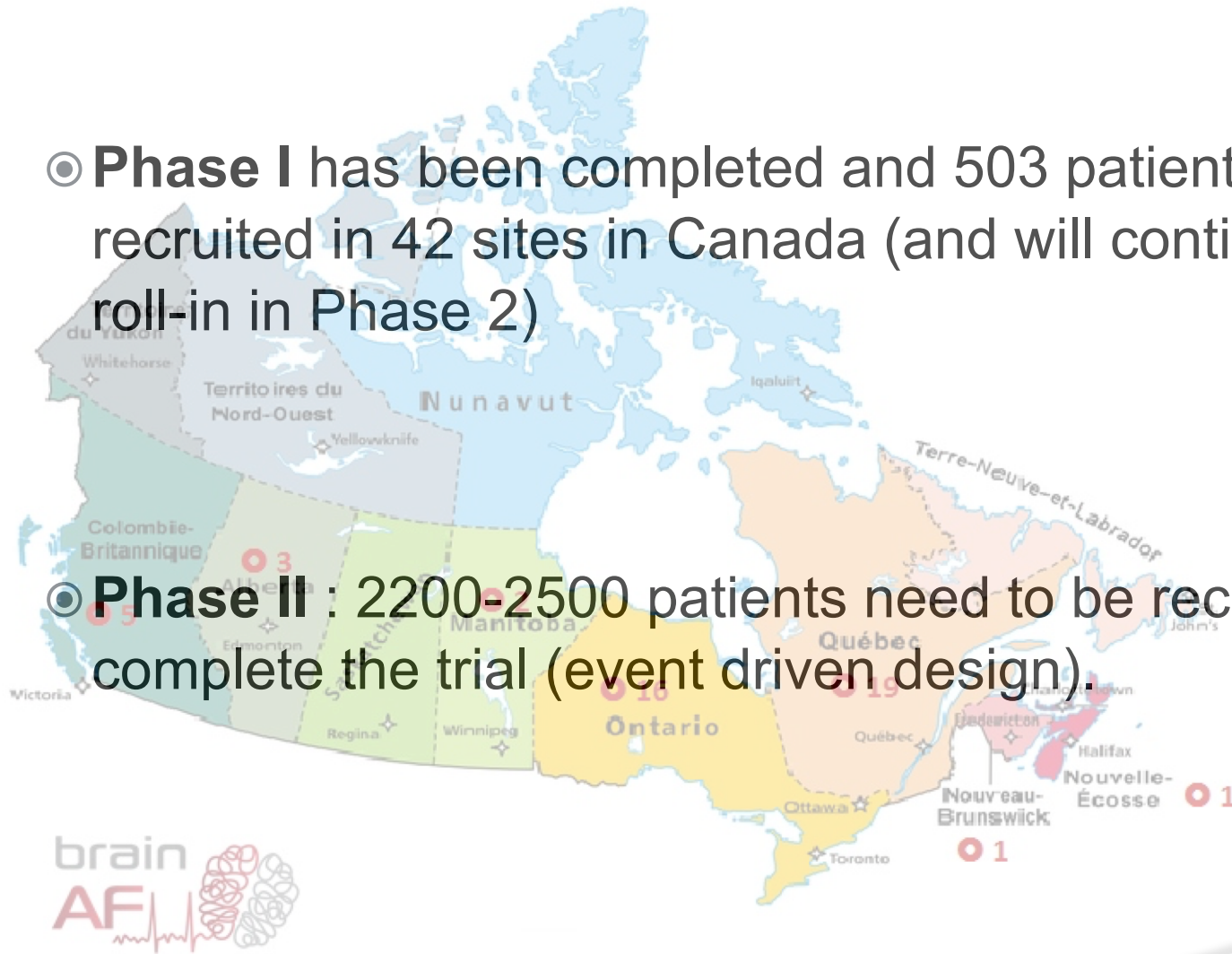
# Exclusion Criteria



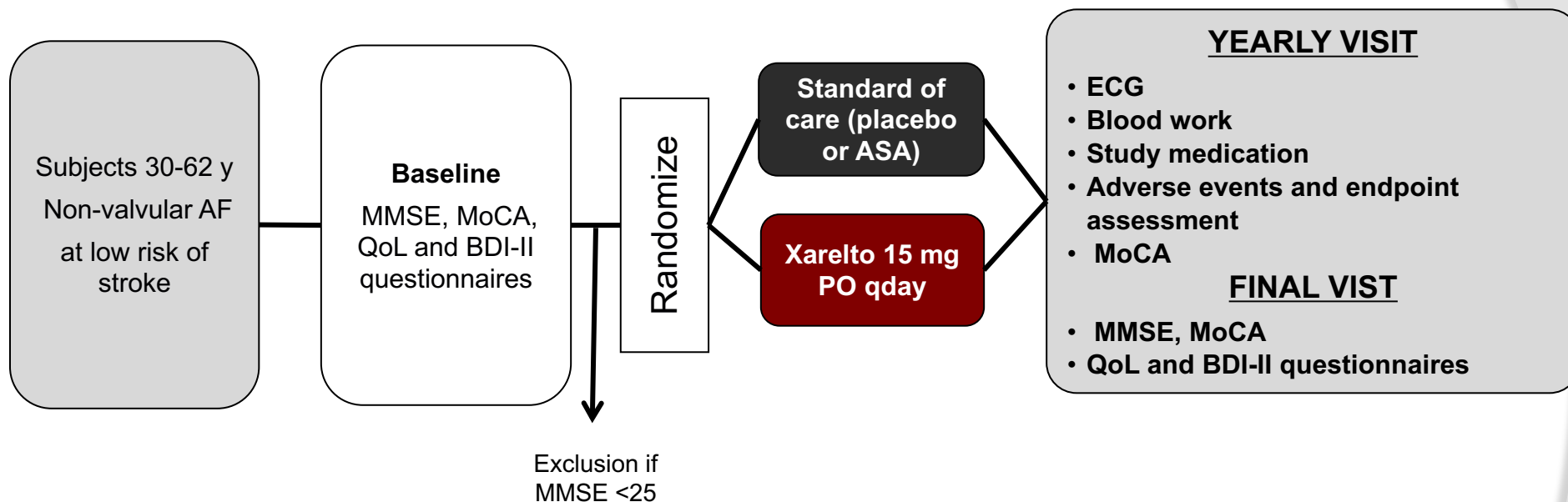
9. Severe renal impairment (creatinine clearance 30 mL/min or less);
10. Active infective endocarditis;
11. Active liver disease (e.g. acute clinical hepatitis, chronic active hepatitis, cirrhosis), or ALT >3 times the upper limit of normal;
12. Women who are pregnant or of childbearing potential not using a medically acceptable form of contraception;
13. Women who are breastfeeding;
14. Anemia or thrombocytopenia (according to the normal range values of the local laboratory);
15. Investigational drug received in the past 30 days;
16. Patients considered unreliable, or having a life expectancy of less than 3 years;
17. Known diagnosis of major depression within the past year.

© **Phase I** has been completed and 503 patients have been recruited in 42 sites in Canada (and will continue FU with roll-in in Phase 2)

© **Phase II** : 2200-2500 patients need to be recruited to complete the trial (event driven design).



# PHASE II: STUDY SCHEME



- Important modifications include:
  - *Primary outcome*: neurocognitive decline measured by MoCA instead of 3MS
  - *Treatment arm*: Xarelto 15 mg PO day versus standard of care, with stratified randomization to ASA if vascular disease or placebo in the absence of vascular disease to comply with current guidelines
  - Major streamlining and simplification of *follow-up and eCRF* to facilitate recruitment
  - Event-driven design trial

# PHASE I: BASELINE CHARACTERISTICS



Characteristic	N = 415
Type of AF	
Paroxysmal	74.3%
Persistent	11.9%
Permanent	13.8%
Prior AF ablation	11.2%
Family history of AF (first degree)	26.1%
Family history of dementia (first degree)	21.5%
Known sleep apnea	16.8%

10% at high risk

**VISUOSPATIAL / EXECUTIVE**

Copy cube

[ ]

Draw CLOCK (Ten past eleven)  
(3 points)

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

Contour   Numbers   Hands

POINTS  
\_\_\_\_/5

**NAMING**

[ ]

[ ]

[ ]

POINTS  
\_\_\_\_/3

**MEMORY**

Read list of words, subject must repeat them. Do 2 trials, even if 1st trial is successful. Do a recall after 5 minutes.

	FACE	VELVET	CHURCH	DAISY	RED
1st trial					
2nd trial					

No points

**ATTENTION**

Read list of digits (1 digit/sec). Subject has to repeat them in the forward order [ ] 2 1 8 5 4  
Subject has to repeat them in the backward order [ ] 7 4 2

\_\_\_\_/2

Read list of letters. The subject must tap with his hand at each letter A. No points if ≥ 2 errors  
[ ] FBACMNAAJKLBAFAKDEAAAJAMOFAAB

\_\_\_\_/1

Serial 7 subtraction starting at 100 [ ] 93 [ ] 85 [ ] 79 [ ] 72 [ ] 65  
4 or 5 correct subtractions: 3 pts, 2 or 3 correct: 2 pts, 1 correct: 1 pt, 0 correct: 0 pt

\_\_\_\_/3

**LANGUAGE**

Repeat: I only know that John is the one to help today. [ ]  
The cat always hid under the couch when dogs were in the room. [ ]

\_\_\_\_/2

Fluency / Name maximum number of words in one minute that begin with the letter F [ ] \_\_\_\_\_ (N ≥ 11 words)

\_\_\_\_/1

**ABSTRACTION**

Similarity between e.g. banana - orange = fruit [ ] train - bicycle [ ] watch - ruler

\_\_\_\_/2

**DELAYED RECALL**

Has to recall words WITH NO CUE	FACE	VELVET	CHURCH	DAISY	RED	Points for UNQUEUED recall only
	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	

\_\_\_\_/5

**Optional**

Category cue						
Multiple choice cue						

**ORIENTATION**

[ ] Date [ ] Month [ ] Year [ ] Day [ ] Place [ ] City

\_\_\_\_/6

© Z.Nasreddine MD   www.mocatest.org   Normal ≥ 26 / 30   TOTAL \_\_\_\_/30

Add 1 point if ≤ 12 yr edu

- MoCA is a screening tool developed specifically for detection of MCI
- Using a cut-of point of 26/30, sensitivity=80-100% and specificity=50-76%<sup>1</sup>
- Using a cut-of point of 24/30, specificity increases to 87%<sup>2</sup>

1-Smith 2007- Nasreddine 2005

2-Cecato 2011

# PHASE I: BASELINE CHARACTERISTICS



Characteristics	N = 415	
MoCA	Range 21-30 out of 30	
MoCA <26*		PAF vs Persistent/Permanent P=0.05
Paroxysmal AF	13.1% (mean age 55.7)	
Persistent AF	20.4% (mean age 55.9 )	
Permanent AF	21.1% (mean age 56.6)	
MoCA <24**		PAF vs Persistent/Permanent P=0.03
Paroxysmal AF	3.9% (mean age 55.0)	
Persistent AF	8.2% (mean age 52.4)	
Permanent AF	10.5% (mean age 54.7)	

Data as of August 02, 2017

**In short, baseline characteristics confirm a high degree of cognitive pathology in this young population with AF, with a “dose-response” relationship**

## PHASE I: OUTCOMES (BLINDED)

<b>Efficacy outcomes at 1 year follow-up</b>	<b>N=277</b>
Cognitive decline (primary endpoint)	18 (6.5%)
Stroke/TIA	2 (0.7%)
<b>Safety outcomes (per patient)</b>	<b>N=497</b>
Death	1 (motorcycle accident)
Major bleeding	1 (post surgery, off-study drug)
Non-major clinically relevant bleeding (NMCRB)	20 (4.0%)
Minimal bleeding	29 (5.8%)
Bleeding in pts with a minimal FU of 12 months (N=277)	NMCRB 19 (6.9%) Minimal 26 (9.4%)

No overlap between the two

2018

**In summary, a 7.2%/year rate of the primary outcome was observed, with an excellent safety profile (no major bleeds on study drugs)**

# In conclusion



- Growing evidence that AF may contribute to cognitive impairment independently of clinical stroke as a result of subclinical emboli
- Important study evaluating whether anticoagulation could reduce **neurocognitive decline/cerebral ischemia** in patients with non-valvular AF and no current indication for oral anticoagulation

# Treat the Heart, Help the Brain

