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Projections on the number of individuals with atrial fibrillation in the European Union, from 2000 to 2060 FREE

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Abstract

Aims

Since atrial fibrillation (AF) is associated with increased risks of cardiovascular and cerebrovascular complications, estimations on the number of individuals with AF are relevant to healthcare planning. We aimed to project the number of individuals with AF in the Netherlands and in the European Union from 2000 to 2060.

Methods and results

Age- and sex-specific AF prevalence estimates were obtained from the prospective community-based Rotterdam Study. Population projections for the Netherlands and the European Union were obtained from the European Union's statistics office. In the age stratum of 55–59 years, the prevalence of AF was 1.3% in men (95% CI: 0.4–3.6%) and 1.7% in women (95% CI: 0.7–4.0%). The prevalence of AF increased to 24.2% in men (95% CI: 18.5–30.7%), and 16.1% in women (95% CI: 13.1–19.4%), for those >85 years of age. This age- and sex-specific prevalence remained stable during the years of follow-up. Furthermore, we estimate that in the European Union, 8.8 million adults over 55 years had AF in 2010 (95% CI: 6.5–12.3 million). We project that this number will double by 2060 to 17.9 million (95% CI: 13.6–23.7 million) if the age- and sex-specific prevalence remains stable.

Conclusion

We estimate that from 2010 to 2060, the number of adults 55 years and over with AF in the European Union will more than double. As AF is associated with significant morbidities and mortality, this increasing number of individuals with AF may have major public health implications.

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