

## **Almanac 2013: cardiac arrhythmias and pacing**

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Important advances have been made in the past few years in the fields of clinical cardiac electrophysiology and pacing. Researchers and clinicians have a greater understanding of the pathophysiological mechanisms underlying atrial fibrillation (AF), which has transpired into improved methods of detection, risk stratification, and treatments. The introduction of novel oral anticoagulants has provided clinicians with alternative options in managing patients with AF at moderate to high thromboembolic risk and further data has been emerging on the use of catheter ablation for the treatment of symptomatic AF. Another area of intense research in the field of cardiac arrhythmias and pacing is in the use of cardiac resynchronisation therapy (CRT) for the treatment of patients with heart failure. Following the publication of major landmark randomised controlled trials reporting that CRT confers a survival advantage in patients with severe heart failure and improves symptoms, many subsequent studies have been performed to further refine the selection of patients for CRT and determine the clinical characteristics associated with a favourable response. The field of sudden cardiac death and implantable cardioverter defibrillators also continues to be actively researched, with important new epidemiological and clinical data emerging on improved methods for patient selection, risk stratification, and management. This review covers the major recent advances in these areas related to cardiac arrhythmias and pacing.