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Younghoon Kwon, Ryan J. Koene, Alan Johnson, Gen-Min Lin, John Ferguson

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## Sleep, Sleep Apnea and Atrial Fibrillation: Questions and Answers

Younghoon Kwon,<sup>a</sup> Ryan J. Koene,<sup>b</sup> Alan Johnson,<sup>a</sup> Gen-Min Lin,<sup>c,e</sup> John Ferguson<sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Division of Cardiovascular Medicine, Department of Medicine and Department of Sleep Medicine, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA, USA

<sup>b</sup> Department of Cardiovascular Medicine, Electrophysiology Section, Cleveland Clinic Foundation, Cleveland, OH, USA

<sup>c</sup> Department of Medicine, Hualien-Armed Forces General Hospital, Hualien 970, Taiwan

<sup>d</sup> Tri-Service General Hospital, National Defense Medical Center, Taipei 114, Taiwan

<sup>e</sup> College of Science and Engineering, National Dong Hwa University, Hualien 974, Taiwan

Corresponding author: Younghoon Kwon (E-mail: yk2j@hscmail.mcc.virginia.edu)

Division of Cardiology, Department of Internal Medicine and Department of Sleep Medicine, University of Virginia, VA 22903, USA

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### Summary

Sleep apnea (SA) is a common sleep disorder increasingly recognized as a risk for cardiovascular disease. Atrial fibrillation (AF) is the most common cardiac arrhythmia and is associated with significant morbidity and mortality. An increasing number of investigations in recent years have linked SA to AF. In this review, we aim to provide a critical overview of the existing evidence in a question and answer format by addressing the following: What is the prevalent association between the two conditions (separating nocturnally detected AF episodes from AF as a prevalent condition)? Is SA a risk factor for incident AF? Is SA a risk factor for recurrence of AF following cardioversion/catheter-based ablation? What is the association between SA and AF in patients with heart failure? Are there signature electrocardiographic markers of AF found in patients with SA? Are there electrophysiology-based studies supporting the link between SA and AF? What other sleep characteristics (beyond SA) are found in patients with AF? What is the impact of SA treatment on AF? What is the effect of AF treatment on sleep? Finally, we address unsolved questions and suggest future directions to enhance our understanding of the AF-sleep apnea relationship.

### Key words

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