

Mayo Clinic Minute

Recognizing ‘holiday heart’

Video	Audio
	“Holiday heart” may sound like another joyous part of the holiday season.
AMY POLLAK, M.D. CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASES Mayo Clinic	“‘Holiday heart’ actually refers to this effect of the stress of too much alcohol, too much salt, higher blood pressure on the heart.”
	Mayo Clinic cardiologist Dr. Amy Pollak says all that stress on the heart can cause an irregular heartbeat known as atrial fibrillation.
	“And, for some people, it feels like their heart is racing out of their chest. Their heart is just beating vigorously. For other folks, they just feel some irregularity – tired, short of breath, just wiped out, no energy.”
	Atrial fibrillation can lead to a stroke
	“If you do feel that your heart is racing around the holidays, and it’s not just from seeing someone underneath the mistletoe, but your heart is racing from, you know, irregularity, or you’re feeling short of breath, any type of chest discomfort ... you really need to seek medical attention.”
	Dr. Pollak says the best way to avoid “holiday heart” is to avoid the excesses that are so prevalent during the holidays.
	She says that doesn’t mean you have to skip the holiday party.
	Just skip some of the booze, cups of coffee, and adding salt on your food.
	For the Mayo Clinic News Network, I’m Ian Roth.