

## Reducing Your Risk

### → How you can improve your health

There are some risk factors for cardiovascular disease that can not be changed. These include age, gender, ethnicity and family history.

The GOOD NEWS is there are many ways to reduce your risk. Work with your healthcare professional to make lifestyle changes that will improve your health and modify your risk.

### Ways to avoid cardiovascular disease

- ✓ Increase physical activity/keep fit
- ✓ Maintain a healthy weight
- ✓ Lower your blood cholesterol
- ✓ Lower your blood pressure
- ✓ Be smokefree
- ✓ Control your blood sugar.

A 'Risk Assessment' booklet is available from your doctor or the Heart Foundation. This provides more detailed information on risk factors, lifestyle changes and treatment options as well as a personal record chart.



## Contact Information

→ Further heart health information is available on the Heart Foundation's website: [www.heartfoundation.org.nz](http://www.heartfoundation.org.nz)

### The National Heart Foundation of New Zealand

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### → We need your help

The Heart Foundation relies almost entirely on voluntary contributions to continue much of its work. This work ranges from funding research into the causes and treatment of heart disease, to providing heart health services and information such as this.

#### Helping the Heart Foundation

You can help the Heart Foundation by:

- Being a volunteer
- Supporting our fundraising events
- Making a donation
- Making a memorial gift, as a mark of respect for those who have passed away
- Purchasing one of our lottery tickets. We offer a house as the major prize!
- Remembering the Heart Foundation in your will
- Becoming a corporate sponsor or partner
- Becoming an advocate.

*Any help you can give will be gratefully accepted.*

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Are You at Risk of Having a Heart Attack or Stroke?



Are You  
at Risk  
of Having a  
Heart Attack  
or Stroke?



→ a helping  
hand to  
making a  
difference

Based on  
*The Assessment and Management  
of Cardiovascular Risk (2003)*

## Heart Attack & Stroke

→ Did you know that two out of five deaths in New Zealand are due to cardiovascular disease?

Yet many heart attacks and strokes are preventable.



Heart attacks, angina, stroke, transient ischaemic attacks (TIAs) and peripheral vascular disease are all forms of cardiovascular disease.

## Am I At Risk?

→ Often, the first time many people know they have cardiovascular disease is when they experience a heart attack or stroke.

**By knowing your risk of cardiovascular disease and making lifestyle changes, you have a better chance of enjoying a long and healthy life.**

Your doctor can assess your risk of developing cardiovascular disease in the next five years, which can range from a mild risk to very high. This 'Risk Assessment' looks at your age, gender, ethnicity, weight, family history, blood pressure and cholesterol levels and diabetic and smoking status.

To see if you need a 'Risk Assessment' done by your doctor, take THE RISK QUIZ opposite.

If you answer 'yes' to ANY of the questions then you need to see your doctor for a 'Risk Assessment'.



## The Risk Quiz

### 1. ARE YOU...?

- Male and older than 45 years
- Female and older than 55 years

### 2. ARE YOU...?

- Male and older than 35 years...
- Female and older than 45 years...  
**AND** have one of the **following risk factors?**
- Smoke tobacco (or recently stopped)
- High cholesterol
- High blood pressure
- Overweight / obese
- Family history of cardiovascular disease:  
*(Father or brother has been diagnosed with cardiovascular disease before the age of 55, mother or sister has been diagnosed with cardiovascular disease before the age of 65)*
- Parents or siblings with diabetes
- Told by your doctor you are at risk of developing diabetes
- Are a Māori, Pacific Islander or from the Indian sub-continent or Fiji.

### 3. HAVE YOU HAD...?

- A heart attack
- A stroke
- A transient ischaemic attack (TIA)
- Angina
- Diabetes.

This means that you are already in a high risk category. Modifying or changing your lifestyle can reduce your risk to help keep you healthy. You should visit your doctor every three months for a check up.

The more times you answered 'YES', the greater your risk of having a heart attack or stroke. So please see your doctor for a 'Risk Assessment'.

If you answered 'NO' but are concerned, then you need to also see your doctor.