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.

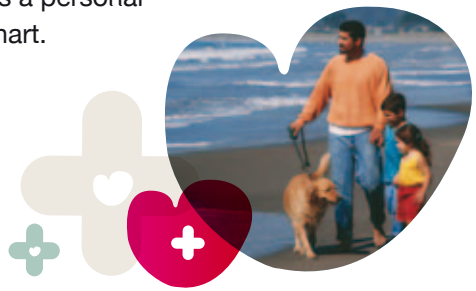
The GOOD NEWS is there are many ways to reduce your risk. Work with your healthcare professional to make lifestyle changes that will improve your health and modify your risk.

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.

To find out your risk of a heart attack or stroke, visit **www.knowyournumbers.co.nz**

Heart health check booklets are available from your doctor, nurse, healthcare professional or the Heart Foundation. These provide more detailed information on risk factors, lifestyle changes and treatment options as well as a personal record chart.



Heart Foundation

Fulfil a lifetime

At the Heart Foundation we are unwavering in our determination to defeat heart disease – the disease that kills more New Zealanders than any other. But we can't do it alone. All the research we fund, materials we produce and activities we undertake, with the support of people like yourself, enable New Zealanders to learn about heart disease and make lifestyle changes, so that they can live heart healthy lives.

We want you to fulfil a lifetime and look forward to precious moments with those you love. You're not done yet. Neither are we.

With your help we can continue to produce high quality resources for New Zealanders affected by heart disease. To make a donation go to www.heartfoundation.org.nz/donate or contact us at:

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Heart Foundation

Are you at risk of heart attack or stroke?

Fulfil a lifetime

Based on *The Cardiovascular Guidelines Handbook 2009.*

Heart attack and stroke

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

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

Yet many heart attacks and strokes are preventable.

Am I at risk?

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

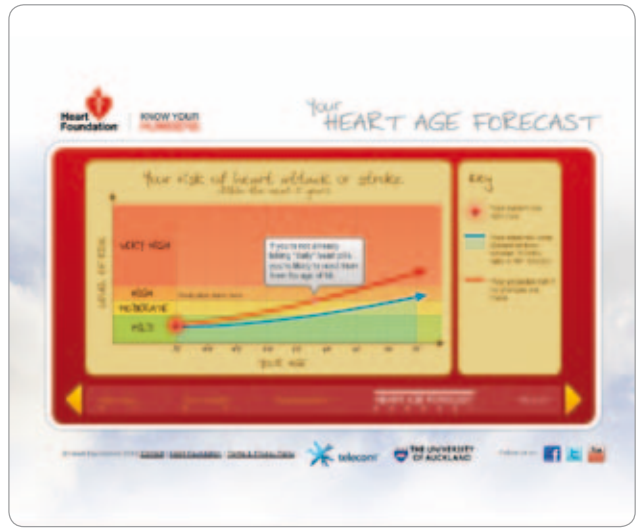
By knowing your risk of heart attack and stroke and making lifestyle changes, you have a better chance of enjoying a long and healthy life.

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

To see if you need a heart health check done by your doctor, nurse or healthcare professional, take THE RISK QUIZ opposite.

If you answer 'yes' to ANY of the questions then you need to see your doctor, nurse or healthcare professional for a heart health check.

You can also find out your risk of a heart attack or stroke by visiting **www.knowyournumbers.co.nz**



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
- 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, nurse or healthcare professional for a heart health check.

If you answered 'NO' but are still concerned about your heart health, then please see your doctor, nurse or healthcare professional.