

What is a
**HEART
HEALTH
CHECK?**



What do your Heart Health Check results mean?

Once your doctor has your results, ask them for your level of risk.

HIGH RISK



If your level of risk is over 15% you have at least a 1 in 7 chance of having a heart attack or stroke in the next five years if left unmanaged.

MODERATE RISK



If your level of risk is between 10-15% you have at least a 1 in 10 chance of having a heart attack or stroke in the next five years if left unmanaged.

LOW RISK



If your level of risk is under 10% you have a less than 1 in 10 chance of having a heart attack or stroke in the next five years if left unmanaged.

Depending on your level of risk, your doctor may prescribe medication to lower your cholesterol, or blood pressure, or both.

You will also need to have your level of risk monitored. Discuss with your doctor how often this needs to be done.



What is a Heart Health Check?

To assess how likely you are to have a heart attack or stroke in the next five years, your doctor will do what is called a Heart Health Check.

1. TALK

You may discuss:

- What you eat
- Your lifestyle & exercise
- Your family health history
- Your medical history

2. LEARN

Your doctor will check your:

- Blood pressure
- Cholesterol
- Risk of having a heart attack or stroke in the next 5 years

3. PLAN

Your doctor will help you to make changes to:

- Balance your diet
- Your physical activity & lifestyle
- Your wellbeing

Having a Heart Health Check can be a good way to take positive steps to protect and improve your health now and for the future.



Why is a Heart Health Check important?

Every 12 minutes an Australian dies from heart, stroke or blood vessel disease. Most heart attacks and strokes are preventable.

One-fifth of Australians aged 45-74 years are at high risk of having a heart attack or stroke in the next five years.

If you are over 45 years (35 years or older for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples), and have not had a heart attack or stroke, see your doctor for a Heart Health Check.

Look for Heart Foundation information on blood pressure and cholesterol for more details on these risk factors or call the free Heart Foundation Helpline 13 11 12.



What can you do now to improve your heart health?

Having a healthy lifestyle is important. You can make positive changes by improving your diet, being active, quitting smoking and reducing your alcohol intake to improve your heart health.



Healthy eating for your heart includes:

- Plenty of vegetables, fruits and wholegrains
- Variety of healthy protein sources including fish and seafood, lean meat and poultry, legumes, nuts and seeds
- Reduced fat dairy such as unflavoured milk, yoghurt & cheese
- Healthy fat choices with nuts, seeds, avocados, olives and their oils for cooking
- Herbs and spices to flavour foods, instead of adding salt



Maintain a healthy weight

It is important to maintain a healthy body weight because it can help lower your blood pressure and cholesterol and lower your risk of having a heart problem.

The Heart Foundation recommends you aim for a waist measurement of less than: 80cm for females or 94cm for males.

If you need to lose weight, speak with your doctor about how to do it in a healthy way.



Physical activity

Physical activity also helps manage heart health risk factors. Do at least 30-45 mins of moderate (e.g. brisk walking) or 15-30 mins of vigorous (e.g. running) physical activity 5 or more days of the week.



Smoking and alcohol

Smoking is a risk factor for heart disease. For help to stop smoking call Quitline (13QUIT, or quit.org.au). Drink no more than two standard drinks on any day and no more than four on any one occasion.

Talk to someone who is
specially trained in heart health
care to answer your questions.

Call our Helpline on 13 11 12.

For more information visit **heartfoundation.org.au**

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