

Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) Health Check

Patient Information

CVD Health Checks are a routine NHS Scotland check to help us keep an eye on heart health. Many heart and circulation problems don't cause symptoms early on, so it's a chance to catch things early or give you reassurance that all's well.

It's nothing to worry about, and doesn't mean there's a problem. We are inviting lots of patients, and there's no expectation that anything will be found. For the vast majority, it's simply a health check for reassurance and general wellbeing.

Background

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is the second most common cause of death after cancer, causing 25% of all deaths in Scotland and around 4,500 avoidable deaths in under 75s each year. The risk for patients within the most deprived communities in Scotland is 5 times higher than those in the least deprived.

Many people do not know that they are living with CVD risk factors. For example, 1.3 million people in Scotland are estimated to have high blood pressure, but only 24% of adults with high blood pressure are treated and controlled. In the most recent [Scottish Health Survey](#), 1 in 3 adults were recorded as having high blood pressure.

To address this, the Scottish Government is promoting CVD health checks to find patients living with key risk factors that they are currently unaware of, and to optimise early interventions to reduce the risk of developing CVD.

What is CVD?

CVD is a general term for conditions that affect the heart and blood vessels. This includes heart attacks, strokes, and other circulation problems. These conditions often develop slowly over time.

Why am I being invited?

You have been invited to take part to help identify and reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke. Many people have risk factors without realising it, and early checks can help prevent problems later on.

Patients are eligible to be invited if:

- They are aged between 35-60; **AND**
- Have not had *all* of the below in the last 3 years:
 - o A blood pressure reading
 - o A blood test for cholesterol
 - o Measurement of height and weight to calculate BMI
 - o Completion of a questionnaire to calculate risk of Type 2 Diabetes, or a blood test (e.g. HbA1c) to check diabetes risk

Being invited does NOT mean there is something wrong or anything to worry about.

What is a CVD Health Check and what will happen at initial appointment?

This is a preventative health check offered by GP practices in Scotland. It looks at common risk factors for heart disease and stroke, even if you feel well. The aim is to identify risks early and offer advice or treatment if needed.

The initial appointment will include:

- Blood pressure measurement;
- Height, weight, and BMI check;
- Questions about smoking, exercise, and family history;
- Completion of a very short diabetes risk questionnaire;
- A blood test for cholesterol and, if required, blood sugar levels.

These results enable us to calculate your overall heart and stroke risk.

The initial appointments are booked into 10 minute slots, and are primarily for the completion of the above tests/screening, rather than a full review. Once results are returned, we will contact you to arrange a further appointment to discuss these in more detail.

What happens after?

Once your results have been returned to us, a further appointment will be arranged for you to discuss them with a clinician. Depending on your results, you may be offered:

- Reassurance if your risk is low;
- Lifestyle advice (for example around diet, activity, or smoking);
- Further monitoring;
- Medication if appropriate.

Any decisions will be made with you, and you can ask questions at any time.

Do I have to take part?

No. The health check is optional. However, many people find it helpful for understanding their health and future risks.

Questions or concerns?

If you have received this guide via text message, we will contact you in the coming days to ask whether you would like to schedule an appointment. Please feel free to ask any questions you may have during this call, or contact the practice via the website or telephone.