

## Heart disease risk - quiz

What is your risk of heart disease? Our quick health quiz can help assess your risk and provide tips on healthy living, diet and exercise to improve your heart health.

### 1. Is there a history of heart disease in your family?

- A. Yes – relatives such as cousins or uncles.
- B. No, or not to my knowledge.
- C. Yes – one or both of my parents.

### 2. Is your age or sex a risk factor?

- A. I'm female.
- B. I'm male and aged in my teens, 20s or 30s.
- C. I'm male and middle-aged, or older.

### 3. How often do you eat fatty foods like full-cream dairy products, cakes, chips and fried foods?

- A. Every day.
- B. Around once per week or less.
- C. Two or three times per week, on average.

### 4. Are you overweight?

- A. No, I'm about the right weight for my height, give or take a few kilos.
- B. Yes, I'm obese and need to lose a lot of weight.
- C. Yes, I could afford to lose a bit of weight.

### 5. If you're overweight, where do you tend to carry those extra kilos?

- A. Around my stomach.
- B. Around my hips.
- C. I'm not overweight.

### 6. Do you smoke cigarettes?

- A. Yes, I smoke every day.
- B. No, I don't smoke.
- C. Sometimes, perhaps on the weekends or when socialising.

### 7. Do you exercise regularly?

- A. Yes, I exercise at least four times per week.
- B. Yes, about two or three times per week.
- C. I hardly exercise at all.

See over...



**8. Do you have diabetes?**

A. Yes, but I control it well.

B. Yes, but I don't manage it very well, or else I think I may have diabetes but haven't seen my doctor about it.

C. I don't have diabetes, according to my doctor at my last medical check-up.

See over...

## Heart disease risk – quiz answers

### Correct answers

1. A= 2 points, B= 3 points and C= 1 point.

The best answer is B.

We tend to inherit things like blood pressure levels, blood clotting tendencies, body build and stress response. Genetic susceptibility can increase your risk of heart disease.

However, it is important to remember that we usually inherit tendencies rather than diseases. You can overcome some inherited tendencies with healthy lifestyle habits.

2. A= 3 points, B= 2 points and C= 1 point.

The best answer is A.

Men are disadvantaged when it comes to cholesterol levels and blood pressure. Men are more likely to develop coronary heart disease in middle age. The risk then progressively rises as they get older. The risk for women is much less, until after the menopause.

Despite our gender and age, we can reduce our risk levels if we follow a healthy lifestyle.

3. A= 1 point, B= 3 points and C= 2 points.

The best answer is B.

A diet high in saturated and trans fats is a risk factor for heart disease. This is because these fats increase low density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol, which is associated with the buildup of plaques that narrow the arteries (atherosclerosis).

4. A= 3 points, B= 1 point and C= 2 points.

The best answer is A.

High blood cholesterol and raised blood pressure are known risk factors for heart disease.

People who are overweight often have high cholesterol and raised blood pressure. Also, their blood is more likely to clot.

5. A= 1 point, B= 2 points and C= 3 points.

The best answer is C.

A person who carries the bulk of their body fat around their stomach ('apple') is at greater risk of heart disease than someone whose body fat tends to settle around their bottom, hips and thighs ('pear'). 'Apples' are also more likely to develop high blood pressure and diabetes. As men tend to be 'apples', they are generally at greater risk of developing heart disease than women.

6. A= 1 point, B= 3 points and C= 2 points.

The best answer is B.

Cigarette smoke contains many chemicals, including nicotine and carbon monoxide.

Some of these chemicals, along with carbon monoxide, damage the inner layer of the arteries. Damage to arteries from smoking causes cholesterol to enter the artery walls more rapidly, and can also lead to the formation of blood clots.

See over...

7. A= 3 points, B= 2 points and C= 1 point.

The best answer is A.

Inactive people ('couch potatoes') are more likely to have heart attacks, heart disease and early death than those who are generally active. Inactive people are more likely to have high cholesterol and raised blood pressure, and are more likely to smoke and be overweight.

8. A= 2 points, B= 1 point and C= 3 points.

The best answer is C.

Diabetes is a risk factor for heart disease. Many people with diabetes have a high cholesterol level and may also have raised blood pressure. Other biochemical changes associated with diabetes may accelerate the development of coronary heart disease.

### **Your score**

**8-12:** Your poor lifestyle choices are putting you at risk of heart disease. Make an appointment with your doctor for some valuable help and guidance on how to make the necessary changes.

**13-18:** Some of your lifestyle habits could be increasing your risk of heart disease. A few changes, such as modifying your diet or quitting cigarettes, can significantly reduce your risk. Browse through the Better Health Channel articles for healthy lifestyle suggestions, or talk to your doctor.

**19-24:** Congratulations, your lifestyle choices are substantially reducing your risk of heart disease.

This page has been produced in consultation with, and approved by, the Baker Heart Research Institute. The Better Health Channel is part of the Department of Human Services, Victoria.

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