

Looking after your future health – what you can do



Your risk of developing heart disease, stroke, diabetes and dementia over the next ten years is the result of the things you do, your age and your tests results.

Heart and stroke risk score:

Reducing the risk of developing dementia: What's good for your heart is good for your brain. Treatment to reduce the risk is usually offered to people with a score of more than 10%.



You can help reduce your risk of developing heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and dementia:

Being more active

Taking medication (statin)

Eating healthily

Stopping smoking

Losing weight if you need to

Keeping socially and mentally active

Reducing the amount of alcohol, you drink

Blood Pressure (BP):

Is the pressure of blood as it flows through your blood vessels. The lower your blood pressure the lower your risk of having a heart attack or stroke.

Safest levels: You should aim for your blood pressure to be below 140/90.



You can help reduce your blood pressure by:

Having less alcohol

Having less salt

Taking medication

Being more active

Eating fruit and veg

Losing weight

Weight:

If you are overweight, losing weight can help you lower your blood pressure and improve your overall health.

Body Mass Index (BMI). Compares your height to your weight and can be a way of predicting your risk of developing a heart attack or a stroke.



You can help to lower your weight by:

Having less alcohol

Having less sugar

Attending support sessions

Being more active

Eating smaller portions

Eating fewer fatty foods

Alcohol:

Avoiding drinking too much alcohol can help reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke, and other conditions like some cancers. Drinking less than 14 units of alcohol a week can lower your risk. For more information visit: www.nhs.uk/livewell/alcohol

Smoking:

Avoiding smoking can help you to reduce the risk of developing heart disease, stroke, dementia and has many other health benefits.

You can get support to stop smoking from:

Your general practice

Smoking cessation advisors

Support groups

Medication

You can find further information here: [NHS stop smoking services help you quit - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://NHS stop smoking services help you quit - NHS (www.nhs.uk))

Physical activity:

Being active on a regular basis can help you to live longer and stay healthy. It is recommended we do 30 minutes of moderate activity five times per week and strength exercises twice a week.

You can find more information here: [Physical activity guidelines for adults aged 19 to 64 - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](http://Physical activity guidelines for adults aged 19 to 64 - NHS (www.nhs.uk))

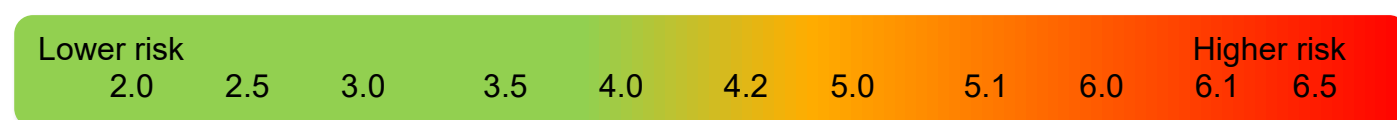
Cholesterol:

Is a blood fat that can block blood vessels. Lowering your cholesterol can reduce the risk of heart attacks and strokes. Statins (cholesterol lowering tablets) can reduce your risk even if you don't have high cholesterol.

Safest levels: Total cholesterol Aim for 5 or less.



Safest levels: Non-HDL cholesterol Aim for 4 or less.



You can help reduce your cholesterol by:

Being more active

Eating smaller portions

Losing weight

Eating less fat (especially saturated fat)

Eating more fruit and veg

Taking statins

Diabetes screening test (HbA1c):

Diabetes is a condition in which a person's blood glucose (sugar) level is too high. A blood test called HbA1c can detect if you have diabetes. Diabetes can lead to heart disease, stroke, kidney, and eye and nerve damage.

A level above 42 would suggest you may develop diabetes in the future and over 48 that you may have diabetes.

You can reduce your risk of developing diabetes by:

Being more active

Losing weight if you need to

Eating a healthy diet

Eating smaller portions of carbohydrates