

Your Rheumatoid Arthritis Results



Pain, discomfort and stiffness are the main symptoms that you may experience from rheumatoid arthritis. You can discuss these symptoms at your care and support planning review. People with rheumatoid arthritis are also more at risk of heart disease and your practice team have done tests to check your risk. This leaflet explains what some of the risks are and what you can do to reduce them.

Cardiovascular Risk:

Your Cardiovascular Risk Score: Your risk of developing heart disease, stroke and diabetes over the next ten years is the result of the things you do, your age and the results of your tests. In general it's better if it's less than 10%. Having rheumatoid arthritis increases your risks.

Low risk	Moderate risk			High risk
0%	6%	9%	10% 15%	19% 20% and above

You can help lower your risk by:

Drinking less alcohol

Losing weight if you need to

Being more active

Taking medication

Eating healthily

Stopping smoking

Smoking:

Rheumatoid Arthritis may be worse in smokers and smoking can weaken how well your medications work. Avoiding smoking can also help reduce cardiovascular and dementia risks. Giving up smoking has many other health benefits.

Non-smoker	Passive (breathing other people's smoke) or ex-smoker	Smoker
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You can get support to stop smoking from:

Your general practice

Stop smoking advisors

Support groups

Medication

You can find further information about stopping smoking here: www.nhs.uk/livewell/smoking

Blood Pressure (BP):

Blood pressure is the pressure of blood that flows through your blood vessels. High blood pressure increases your cardiovascular risk and risk of kidney disease.

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

$\frac{125}{75}$	$\frac{130}{78}$	$\frac{136}{78}$	$\frac{140}{90}$	$\frac{145}{95}$	$\frac{150}{100}$	$\frac{155}{105}$	$\frac{180}{110}$ or above
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You can help reduce your blood pressure by:

Drinking less alcohol

Having less salt

Taking medication

Being more active

Eating fruit and veg

Losing weight

Cholesterol:

Cholesterol is a blood fat that can block blood vessels. Lowering your total cholesterol can reduce your risk of heart attacks and strokes.

Safest levels: Total cholesterol Aim for 5 or less.



You can help reduce your cholesterol by:

- Taking medication
- Eating smaller portions
- Losing weight/being more active
- Eating less fat (especially saturated fat)
- Eating oily fish
- Eating more fruit and veg

Weight:

If you are overweight, losing weight can help your joints, mobility, 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 work out your own BMI www.nhs.uk/health-assessment-tools/calculate-your-body-mass-index/calculate-bmi-for-adults



You can help to lower your weight by:

- Drinking less alcohol
- Eating less sugar
- Being more active
- Attending support sessions
- Eating fewer fatty foods
- Eating smaller portions