

Your heart and stroke risk score

Knowing your risk of getting heart, stroke and vascular disease (together known as 'cardiovascular disease' or 'CVD') is the first step that you can take to help to prevent it.

How is my heart and stroke risk measured?

Your doctor will test and record a range of your risk factors, including:

- blood pressure
- age
- cholesterol
- sex
- whether or not you smoke.

He or she will also look at other important factors that can increase your risk, such as whether or not you have:

- diabetes
- chronic kidney disease
- an irregular heart beat
- a family history of CVD or high cholesterol.

Your doctor will then use a 'risk calculator' to work out your overall heart and stroke risk score.

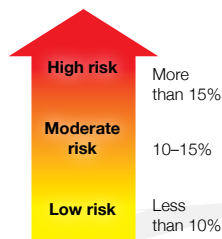
What does my heart and stroke risk score mean?

Your risk score shows your chance of getting CVD within five years.

For example, if your risk score was calculated to be more than 15%, you have a high risk of getting CVD in the next five years.

If all of the people with a risk score of more than 15% were grouped together, about 1 in 7 will get CVD within the next five years.

If your risk score is less than 10%, you have a low risk of getting CVD in the next five years.



What happens next?

Your doctor will look at your risk score and your individual risk factors to work out what steps you should take to reduce your risk. If you are:

- **low risk:** ask your doctor to measure your risk again in two years' and maintain a healthy lifestyle.
- **moderate risk:** ask your doctor to measure your risk twice a year, and follow your doctor's advice and the tips for reducing your risk of CVD in the full consumer booklet *Know your heart and stroke risk*.*
- **high risk:** ask your doctor for advice and follow it.

Heart and stroke risk score: your risk of getting CVD within the next five years

Your doctor has calculated your heart and stroke risk score by looking at your risk factors and turning them into a percentage score. Your heart and stroke risk score is

_____ %

How can I reduce my risk factors?

1. Stop smoking and avoid second-hand smoke.
2. Be active every day. Aim for at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity, such as brisk walking, on most, if not all, days.
3. Avoid adding salt to food. Choose 'no added salt', 'low salt' or 'salt reduced' foods where possible.
4. Eat a variety of foods, including vegetables, wholegrains, lean meats, oily fish, fruit, low fat dairy and vegetable/seed oils. Remember to also eat nuts, seeds and legumes.
5. Take your medicines as prescribed by your doctor.
6. Visit your doctor regularly.

7. Look for resources that may help you to reduce your risk. Start with these websites for lots of helpful information:

www.diabetesaustralia.com.au
www.heartfoundation.org.au
www.kidney.org.au
www.strokefoundation.com.au.

(These are the health charities that form the National Vascular Disease Prevention Alliance.)

*This leaflet is based on the booklet *Know your heart and stroke risk*. We recommend that you read *Know your heart and stroke risk* to get a better understanding of CVD and why it's so important for you to know your heart and stroke risk score. You can download the full booklet from www.diabetesaustralia.com.au, www.heartfoundation.org.au, www.kidney.org.au and www.strokefoundation.com.au.

An initiative of the National Vascular Disease Prevention Alliance



The NVDPA is a group of four leading and well-known Australian charities: Kidney Health Australia, Diabetes Australia, the National Heart Foundation of Australia and the National Stroke Foundation. It was established in 2000 and aims to reduce cardiovascular disease in Australia.

© 2009 National Heart Foundation of Australia

ISBN: 978-1-921226-44-1
CON-065

Terms of use: This material has been developed for general information and educational purposes only. It does not constitute medical advice. Please consult your health care provider if you have, or suspect you have, a health problem. The information contained in this material has been independently researched and developed by the National Vascular Disease Prevention Alliance and is based on the available scientific evidence at the time of writing. It is not an endorsement of any organisation, product or service. While care has been taken in preparing the content of this material, the National Vascular Disease Prevention Alliance and their employees cannot accept any liability, including for any loss or damage, resulting from the reliance on the content, or for its accuracy, currency and completeness. This material may be found in third parties' programs or materials (including but not limited to show bags or advertising kits). This does not imply an endorsement or recommendation by the National Vascular Disease Prevention Alliance for such third parties' organisations, products or services, including these parties' materials or information. Any use of National Vascular Disease Prevention Alliance material by another person or organisation is done so at the user's own risk.