

Stoke Gifford and Conygre Medical Centre Cardiovascular Risk - Patient information leaflet

Based on your **recent cardiovascular calculation** it has shown you have at least a moderate risk of developing a stroke or heart attack in the next 10 years.

To calculate your risk, we used several risk factors **not just cholesterol**. Risk factors are something that increase the chance of developing a disease.

What are the other risk factors?

- Age (being older increases your risk)
- Sex (being male increases your risk)
- Smoking
- High blood pressure (even if on medication)
- Diabetes
- Family history of heart disease (a family member less than 60 years old with either heart disease or stroke)
- Poor diet and excessive alcohol
- Lack of exercise
- Being overweight
- Ethnic origin

It is important to note that your risk of developing disease is never zero and regardless of other risk factors, your risk naturally increases with age being the strongest determinant.

What does my risk score mean?

Your risk is shown as a **QRisk score** that will tell you whether you are at low, moderate, or high risk of developing cardiovascular disease in the next 10 years:

LOW RISK- QRISK < 10%

You have less than a one in ten chance of having a heart attack or stroke in the next 10 years

MODERATE RISK- QRISK 10-20%

You have a one to two in ten chance of having a heart attack or stroke in the next 10 years

HIGH RISK- QRISK >20%

You have at least a two in ten chance of having a heart attack or stroke in the next 10 years

Current guidance suggests that patients with risk scores of 10% or more should be treated with medication.

What can you do to lower your risk?

1) LIFESTYLE CHANGES

Stop smoking, exercise, eat a balanced diet, reduce alcohol intake, keep your weight and waist in check. For further information and support please visit <https://oneyou.southglos.gov.uk/>.

2) TAKE A STATIN MEDICATION

Taking this medication everyday helps reduce fatty deposition in your arteries and can reduce your risk of developing a heart attack by up to 25%. Please see below for further information on statins.

3) TAKE MEDICATION TO REDUCE YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE

You are eligible for treatment if your Qrisk is >10% and your Home Average Blood Pressure reading (an average from 14 readings) is greater than 140/90 for those under 80 years old or over 150/90 for the over 80s.

IF YOU ARE NOT ON TREATMENT FOR BLOOD PRESSURE AND WANT TO CHECK YOUR AVERAGE BLOOD PRESSURE, PLEASE VISIT YOUR LOCAL PHARMACY

Facts on statins

1. Statins are the most important factor for prevention and treatment of cardiovascular disease with substantial evidence of reduction of morbidity and mortality.
2. Statins reduce cholesterol by at least 40%
3. Statins can reduce your risk of developing a heart attack or stroke by up to 25%
4. In clinical trials, statins were found to be largely well tolerated.

Side effects of statins

Despite statins being largely well tolerated, there are side effects as is the same for all medication. Common (1 in 10) side effects of statins include: constipation; diarrhoea; nausea; dizziness; flatulence; abdominal pain and headaches.

If you notice you start to experience muscle cramps/pain (rare side effect), please stop taking the medication and get in contact with the surgery.

Statins can interact with other medicines and grapefruit juice. They are not suitable for some people with liver disease or pregnant or breast-feeding women.

Other key information on statins

Statins should be taken regularly every day for the rest of your life to be effective.

Statins should not be used in isolation from other lifestyle changes that will also help to reduce your overall risk.

Please click on the link below for a video from the British Heart Foundation on how statins prevent heart attacks and strokes.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=koyo1hpDwW8>

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO CONSIDER A STATIN, PLEASE CONTACT OUR CLINICAL PHARMACY TEAM VIA ASK MY GP