

CORONARY HEART DISEASE (CHD) INFORMATION SHEET

Coronary heart disease is the term that describes what happens when your heart's blood supply is blocked or interrupted by a build-up of fatty substances in the coronary arteries. This process is known as atherosclerosis and the fatty deposits are called atheroma. Although coronary heart disease (CHD) cannot be cured, treatment can help manage the symptoms and reduce the risk of further problems.

Why should I attend my annual coronary heart disease review?

Coronary heart disease can be managed effectively with a combination of lifestyle changes, medicines and in some cases surgery. The symptoms of coronary heart disease can then be reduced and the functioning of the heart improved.

Your review appointment is a regular opportunity to discuss changes to your lifestyle and treatment, which will benefit you. You can also raise any questions or concerns you have about your health and medication. This can help to reduce your risk of angina and heart attacks. The lifestyle changes and medications that will be discussed also help to reduce your risk of diabetes, high blood pressure and stroke.

What will happen at my appointment?

The nurse will discuss your condition with you and ask specific questions to find out if you are having any problems. She will ask about your lifestyle and your medication and check your height and weight, along with your blood pressure. She will also perform some blood tests. She will then be able to advise you about any changes she would recommend. If needed, she will refer you to a doctor for further review.

What lifestyle changes will help me?

- Stopping smoking. This will also reduce your risk of stroke, COPD and cancer. You can get help and support from 0800 052 5855 and www.smokefree.nhs.uk
- Reduce intake of foods high in saturated fat such as butter, cheese, cakes and biscuits.
- Small amounts of unsaturated fat has benefits e.g. oily fish, avocados, seeds
- Increasing your regular exercise if needed. Advice can be obtained from www.prescription4exercise.com
- Weight loss if your BMI is greater than 25
- Reducing your alcohol intake to 14 units per week for women and 21 units per week for men. for help and support contact 0300 555 5999 and www.bdaat.co.uk

What tests may help me?

- Diabetes screen – if you are diabetic this increases the likelihood of having problems with your cardiovascular disease
- Cholesterol measurement – too much cholesterol increases the risk of atherosclerosis
- Blood pressure measurement – high blood pressure is a risk factor for CHD.
- Kidney function testing

What medication may help me?

- Antiplatelet drugs such as aspirin and clopidogrel, thin the blood and help to prevent clots.
- Statins to lower cholesterol e.g. simvastatin, atorvastatin
- Beta- blockers to treat angina and high blood pressure e.g. bisoprolol, atenolol
- Ace inhibitors help to improve blood flow and lower blood pressure e.g. ramipril, lisinopril