

MEMBER ENGAGEMENT

Member blog – Cardiovascular health

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-BLOG-

It's time for a heart to heart

Our heart is at the centre of our circulatory system, pumping oxygen and nutrient-containing blood around our bodies, which is why we need to ensure we're equipped with the right information to best take care of it.

Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death in Australia, causing 27% of deaths with around 1.2 million¹ Australians living with one or more heart or vascular conditions.

To help you understand the actions you can take to reduce your level of risk, Dr Priya Chagan, General Manager Health Services at our insurance partner [TAL](#), shares information on cardiovascular disease and ways we can look after our heart health.

Prevention is better than cure

Preventative health screening tests have long been advocated for as valuable health care strategies to assist in early diagnosis.

It's far better to be proactive and that's why it's crucial that all Australians take care of their heart and catch up on health checks even before they have any symptoms. Quite simply, the earlier you kick start preventative measures, the easier it is to prevent any potential heart complications.

High blood pressure and high cholesterol can damage your heart and blood vessels, however there are often no noticeable symptoms, so without any tests it's unlikely you would know that you have these underlying health conditions.

The best way to understand your risk is to speak to your GP about cardiovascular disease screening and prevention and have a heart health check. Your doctor will be able to provide the appropriate timing and frequency for screening tests based on your age, overall health, and medical history.

Understanding your family history

Your family health history can help identify if you are at higher risk for certain conditions. The good news is that just because you might have a family history of cardiovascular disease, it doesn't mean that you will face the same conditions – it just means you're more likely to have them. Not all health conditions are inevitable, and your health can be managed by making lifestyle changes.

Control the controllable

There are a number of behavioural risk factors when it comes to heart disease that you can control. An unhealthy diet, being physically inactive, smoking, high blood pressure and cholesterol, stress, and harmful use of alcohol are all factors that and can be improved through simple changes.

The effects of these behavioural risk factors may show up as raised blood pressure, blood glucose, and/or obesity. Through a few simple changes and additions to your everyday routine, you can set yourself up to enjoy a heart-healthy life now and into the future.

Nurturing a healthy heart

With the prevalence of cardiovascular disease continuing to increase in Australia, and across the globe, making healthy lifestyle changes, keeping on top of regular doctor visits, and being aware of your family history can help to reduce the risk.

1. [NATIONAL HEALTH SURVEY FIRST RESULTS](#)
2. [CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION](#)
3. [HEART FOUNDATION](#)

-ENDS-

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