



CARDIAC RISK FACTORS

INTRODUCTION

Was there anything in yesterday’s teaching that you did not understand or was not clear? If yes, write down your question(s) to ask the nurse or doctor on your next visit.

My question(s):	Reason why I am asking:

Let’s talk about cardiac risk factors today. Refer to the Living Well With Heart Disease Book (the book you received in the hospital), Chapter 1, starting on page 5 or click this link: <https://tinyurl.com/yj95x8ax>

WHAT ARE RISK FACTORS?

Risk factors increase your risk of a heart attack. Some of the risk factors can be changed and some cannot be changed.

LIFESTYLE RISK FACTORS (THIS IS SOMETHING YOU CAN CHANGE)

Be smoke free: This is one of the most important things you can do for your heart. There is no safe amount of smoking, even second-hand smoke, increases the risk of a heart attack.

Help is available for all Manitobans over 18 who want to quit smoking. Click on this link to learn more: <https://sharedhealthmb.ca/patient-care/quit-smoking/>

Exercise: Exercise is good medicine for the heart. It helps lower blood pressure, improve cholesterol, control weight and makes you feel better. Move more and sit less. On Tuesday you will learn more about exercise.

Eat a heart health diet: Heart healthy eating can improve cholesterol levels, lower blood pressure and blood sugar levels. On Monday you will learn more about diet.

Body weight: A healthy diet and exercise can help you. Check with your nurse or doctor to see what your weight should be if you are not sure. Set goals and start slowly.

Stress: Coping with stress is good for your heart. Understand your stress and how to care for yourself. There are many ways to help with stress, here are some to consider: balance work and play, exercise regularly, eat well, practice meditation, stress reduction or yoga, and sleep enough, see links for more information <https://tinyurl.com/ycu9bb89>, <https://tinyurl.com/ypwsyumf>

Alcohol and Recreational Drugs: Alcohol is a risk factor for high blood pressure and weight gain. There is no safe level of alcohol. Any recreational drugs can increase the risk of having a stroke or heart attack.

RISK FACTORS YOU CANNOT CHANGE

Age and Sex: The risk of a heart attack increases with age. Heart attack in women increase after menopause. If you want to learn more about heart attack and women click on the link: <https://cwhhc.ottawaheart.ca/education/risk-factors/gender>

Family History: If your mother or a sister had a heart attack before 65 or before menopause or your father or a brother had a heart attack before age 55 you are at higher risk for heart disease.

Ethnicity: Indigenous, South Asian, Polynesians, Filipinos and African people have higher risk of heart disease because high blood pressure and diabetes are more common in them.

MEDICAL CONDITIONS YOU CAN CHANGE

High Blood Pressure: Increases the work of the heart and is an important risk factor for heart attack. Know your blood pressure is too high. Check with your nurse or doctor if you are unsure. As a rule, your blood pressure usually should be less than 135 mmHg at home.

Cholesterol: You are on a medication called a 'statin' to help lower your cholesterol. Whatever cholesterol level you had was too high because you had a heart attack. The best way to lower your cholesterol is a 'statin'. Diet is important but it is not enough to lower cholesterol to the level it needs to be.

Diabetes: For people with diabetes, it is important to be on medications to prevent another heart attack. Talk with the nurse or doctor to make sure you are on the right medications to control your diabetes.

GOALS

Setting goals will help you control your risk factors. Review the worksheet at the end of *Chapter One in the Living Well with Heart Disease* book.

A few important points to keep in mind:

- Write down your goals
- Plan how to achieve your goals
- Get support from those around you
- Be confident, you can get to your goals, we are here to help if you need it!

To learn more about goals click here: [Setting recovery goals after a heart attack - Heart Foundation](#)

LEARN MORE ABOUT CARDIAC RISK FACTORS

At the MB ACS Network website: <https://mbacsnetwork.ca/education> or scan the QR code.

