I’M NOT OLD OR OVERWEIGHT, PLUS I FEEL FINE. SURELY I DON’T HAVE FH?

- FH affects people from birth. That means even children and young adults, and those of normal weight, could have FH.
- Many people with FH have no physical signs and may feel fine. However, the high cholesterol in their blood puts them at risk of developing hardening and thickening in the arteries, which could lead to a heart attack.
- So, even if you feel fine, it’s important to get screened for FH if your family member has FH or had heart disease at a relatively young age (<55 years in men or <60 years in women).

WHAT DOES SCREENING INVOLVE?

If you think you may have FH, talk to your doctor about it. He or she may arrange for a simple blood test (either fasting or non-fasting) to measure the amount of cholesterol in your blood.

If your cholesterol is high, your doctor may ask for your consent to refer you to FHCARE, a team of healthcare professionals that can help determine whether you are likely to have FH.

In some instances, FHCARE may also approach you about screening if one of your family members is suspected to have FH.

Contact FHCARE today
By E-mail: cholesterol.info@ktph.com.sg
By Phone: (+65) 6602 2346
(+65) 9674 5167
(+65) 9823 9793
Website: www.myheart.org.sg/FH

I (OR MY FAMILY MEMBER) AM READY TO GET SCREENED. HOW DO I GO ABOUT IT?

1. Blood test to measure your cholesterol levels
2. Your consent is obtained
3. FHCARE nurse will collect information about your health and the health of your family members (if anyone has had FH, high cholesterol or early heart disease), and screen your family members for FH
4. Treatment is initiated for you

Materials developed by:


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DO YOU KNOW IF YOU OR YOUR FAMILY MEMBERS HAVE FAMILIAL HYPERCHOLESTEROLEMIA

How screening, early detection and treatment can save the lives of you and your family
FH is a genetic condition in which high cholesterol levels are passed down in families, increasing the risk of premature heart disease (i.e. chest pain, heart attacks, strokes) by up to 20 times over people without the condition.¹

WHAT IS FAMILIAL HYPERCHOLESTEROLEMIA (FH)?

IT’S A GENETIC DISEASE, SO WHAT CAN I DO ANYWAY?

At present, you can’t change your genes if you have FH. But there is a lot you can do to prevent the disease from getting worse and to help you and your family live long, healthy lives:

Start treatment.
Even though FH is a genetic disease, a combination of medications and lifestyle changes is effective in lowering cholesterol levels and the risk of heart disease, often to normal levels.

The most commonly used medications are statins.

Treatment can make a big difference in your life:

1. People with FH who started statin treatment as children went on to have normal lifespans.²
2. Adults treated with statins reduced their risk of heart attacks to normal (similar to people without FH).³

Adjust your lifestyle.
Make healthy food choices and be more active physically. Leading a healthy lifestyle could help to lower the amount of medication that you need to control your cholesterol. You can visit www.myheart.org.sg and www.hpb.gov.sg for more ideas on how to eat and live healthily.

Encourage your family members to get screened, even if they are young and feel well. By doing so, they can be treated early if they have FH, just like this mother of two young children.

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Confronting common fears of lifelong medication:

Some people are very fearful about the prospect of being on medication for the rest of their lives. Learn how a patient in his 20s coped with his fears with the support of his family.

Scan the QR code to watch video

If you experience side effects with statins, don’t be discouraged. Talk to your doctor about your side effects.

He or she may suggest other treatment options, such as cholesterol absorption inhibitors (eg, ezetimibe) and PCSK9 inhibitors. Switching to another medication helped this FH patient to maintain his busy, active lifestyle.

Scan the QR code to watch video

FH IS AN INHERITED DISEASE

It is the most common form of inherited heart disease, with one baby born with FH every minute.⁵

This condition affects 1 in 250 people around the world, which works out to be 20,000 people in Singapore.²

HOW COMMON IS IT?

FH IS PASSED DOWN IN FAMILIES.

If one of your parents, siblings or children has FH, you have a 50% chance of also having it.⁷

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