

Press release: Heart Age Test gives early warning of heart attack and stroke

Public Health England (PHE) is calling for adults across the country to take a free, online [Heart Age Test](#), which will provide an immediate estimation of their 'heart age'. If someone's heart age is higher than their actual age, they are at an increased risk of having a heart attack or stroke.

Cardiovascular disease (CVD), with stroke and heart attack being the most common examples, is the [leading cause of death](#) for men and the second leading cause of death for women.

A quarter (24,000) of CVD deaths are in people under the age of 75, with 80% of these preventable if people made lifestyle and behaviour changes to improve their heart health (around 19,200 deaths per year – the equivalent to 50 deaths a day or one every 30 minutes). Knowing their heart age helps people to find out whether they are at risk and consider what they can do to reduce this risk.

High cholesterol and high blood pressure can both increase someone's heart age, making them up to 3 times more likely to develop heart disease or have a stroke. In England, one in four adults have [high blood pressure](#) yet a [further 5.6 million](#) are living with the condition undiagnosed, placing millions of lives at risk of premature death and ill health.

The Heart Age Test asks a number of simple physical and lifestyle questions and provides an immediate estimation of someone's heart age, as well as a prediction of the risk of having a heart attack or stroke by a certain age. It also gives suggestions on lifestyle changes to help people reduce their heart age such as losing weight, quitting smoking, exercising regularly and cutting back on alcohol.

The Heart Age Test has been completed more than 1.9 million times and four out of five (78%) people have a heart age higher than their actual age. Worryingly, 34% have a heart age over 5 years and 14% at least 10 years over their actual age.

Professor Jamie Waterall, National Lead for cardiovascular disease at PHE said:

Millions are at risk of cardiovascular disease but don't know it, putting themselves at real risk of suffering ill-health or dying younger. Knowing your heart age is a simple way of finding out whether you're at risk of a heart attack or stroke. By making important lifestyle changes you can reduce your risk before it's too late.

Taking a Heart Age Test is something you can easily do at home, but it could be one of the most important things you do to help you live a healthy longer life.

Dr. Matt Kearney, national clinical director for cardiovascular disease prevention, at NHS England, said:

The heart age test is a simple and effective online device with the potential to help millions of people.

The long-term plan for the NHS will prioritise saving lives through improved protection against cardiovascular disease, and increased public understanding of the risks of stroke and heart disease will mean fewer people have to face these devastating conditions.

To help raise awareness of the importance of people knowing their heart age, TV doctor and GP, Dr. Hilary Jones will be taking on the challenge of testing 50 people's heart age over the course of one day in London on Tuesday 4 September.

Dr. Hilary Jones said:

With 50 preventable deaths every day of people under the age of 75, this is serious. It's vital that people know their heart health and take steps to reduce their risk of stroke and heart attack.

As well as obesity, poor diet and a lack of exercise, high blood pressure is a significant risk factor for cardiovascular disease, but these are all things that people can change, and they can change them now.

As part of the campaign, Amazon and Omron – the UK's leading blood pressure monitor manufacturer – are working with Public Health England to launch a roadshow called 'Treasure Your Heart' to engage more people in the idea of knowing their heart age and blood pressure.

Amazon's Treasure Truck will arrive in London and Manchester for 2 days to support the campaign and Omron's nurses and technicians will be testing the blood pressure of as many people as possible. The events will be in London and Manchester on Tuesday 4 and Wednesday 5 September.

Slimming World is also supporting the campaign to raise awareness of how losing weight can help to improve heart health and reduce the risk of cardiovascular disease and is offering an exclusive discount for new members who take the Heart Age Test.

PHE's Heart Age campaign will run until 30 September. Adults are encouraged to search 'heart age' to take the free online test.

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