

Cholesterol, Cardiovascular Risk and Statins

Understanding Your Cholesterol Levels

As part of routine reviews or the over 40s NHS Health check, your GP might arrange for your cholesterol levels to be checked. Please click on this link for further information: <https://patient.info/news-and-features/understanding-your-cholesterol-levels>. It will explain everything there is to know about cholesterol, why we check it and why it can be associated to heart attacks, strokes and other life-altering medical conditions.

Risk of Heart Attacks or Strokes

Your cholesterol levels are only one risk factor for cardiovascular disease. Combined with other risk factors, such as age or blood pressure, your GP will calculate an overall risk score to advise on whether starting statin therapy would be in your best interest. This is called the QRISK score, and more information can be found at this link: <https://patient.info/heart-health/cardiovascular-disease-atheroma/cardiovascular-health-risk-assessment>.

Statin Therapy

Statins are a type of medication that lowers the overall cholesterol. There is significant evidence that commencing statin therapy in patients who have a greater than 10% risk of developing a heart attack or stroke within the next 10 years, can reduce their risk. Please click on this link for further information: <https://patient.info/heart-health/high-cholesterol/statins-and-other-lipid-lowering-medicines>.

This is not the only solution, however, as lifestyle changes (exercise and diet) remain of great importance as well.

All medication has the potential for side effects so it is important that you have regular blood tests as advised by the practice and attend regular medication reviews.

What Will Happen Next?

If your GP identifies that you may benefit from a statin, they will ask you to arrange a routine telephone call to start the conversation. Reading the leaflets provided in the above links before speaking to your GP would be very helpful.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Trumpington Street Medical Practice Team