

Cardiovascular Screening

Do I need a cardiovascular screen if I have a family history of stroke or heart attack?

Yes, the risk of cardiovascular disease is higher if either of your parents suffered a stroke or heart disease before the age of 70.

Is the exercise ECG very strenuous and will I be able to complete it?

The exercise ECG involves walking on a treadmill with a gradually increasing speed and slope to increase your heart rate. This may take up to 10 minutes of exercise. The test is stopped if the patient feels unable to complete for any reason.

I suffer from angina / have had a heart attack in the past, will I be asked to perform an exercise ECG?

No. Patients who have angina or have had a heart attack will already have been investigated fully by the hospital they attended. A resting ECG will be performed.

I am unable to walk, how does this affect the exercise ECG?

Prior to performing the exercise ECG, our cardiovascular nurse specialist will go through a questionnaire with you; the exercise test will not be performed if you or the nurse thinks it unsuitable. A resting ECG will be performed.

When will I get the results?

Our cardiovascular nurse specialist will discuss the results of the ultrasound and exercise ECG at the end of the session. Blood results usually take 2-3 days but you will receive a full written report within a week detailing all the results and recommendations.

How do I book a screen?

Please contact the Health Screening Department at The Alexandra Hospital on 0161 495 7044 to arrange an appointment. You will usually be seen within four weeks.

We will send out some paperwork confirming your appointment and some pre-screen guidelines about how to prepare for the screen and what you can expect on the day.

More information about the Health Screening Services offered can be found on www.alexandrahospital.co.uk and detailed information on vascular disease can be found at www.ivs-online.co.uk

To book an appointment
or for more information please call us on:

0161 495 7044

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Vascular disease is the major cause of death in the UK accounting for 40% of all deaths


Independent Vascular Services^{Ltd.}

Health screening @ The Alex

Why do I need a health screen?

Good health is invaluable but we often take it for granted. Simple changes in the way we lead our lives could improve our general health. Many people don't realise they are at risk until a heart attack or stroke occurs.

An IVS screen offers a thorough pain-free analysis of the vascular system and the risk of developing health problems. Normal results may give you peace of mind.

If early disease is detected we can advise you on lifestyle changes and possible medication to reduce or even reverse disease progression.

Am I at risk?

You may benefit from a cardiovascular screen if you answer yes to 2 or more of the following questions:

- Are you a man over the age of 45?
- Are you a woman over the age of 55?
- Is there a history of heart disease or stroke in your family?
- Do you, or have you ever smoked?
- Is your cholesterol raised?
- Do you exercise less than 20 minutes per day over the course of a week?
- Are you overweight?
- Have you ever had the symptoms of angina, a heart attack or a mini-stroke?
- Do you get cramping pains in your legs?

What does a health screen involve?

Cardiovascular screening is quick and painless: in most cases you will be finished within two hours.

You will be asked to starve for eight hours and a blood sample will be taken to measure your cholesterol and to detect diabetes.

A specialist nurse will take you through a health and lifestyle questionnaire. The cardiovascular screen uses ultrasound and is completely pain-free. A small amount of gel coats the skin and the arteries are imaged by a hand-held ultrasound probe, very like a pre-natal check.

The arteries are investigated at the neck, ankle, back of the knee, groin and abdomen.

You will undertake a monitored ECG, which involves placement of adhesive electrodes on the chest followed by a brisk walk for ten minutes.

At the end of the tests our specialist cardiovascular nurse will explain your results and give advice tailored to your individual cardiovascular disease. This will help you to adopt healthier habits and reduce your risk of cardiovascular disease.

A full report and recommendations will be forwarded to you within one week.

If you need to see a specialist in heart or vascular disease we will arrange this for you.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is the screen uncomfortable?

Apart from a blood test, all investigations are completely pain-free. These investigations do not involve entering a tunnel and even patients with claustrophobia will be entirely comfortable.

Do I have to have a referral from my doctor?

No, we can perform any of the vascular investigations without a referral but, depending on results, we may recommend you seek the advice of your GP or specialist for further treatment.

Will having a screen affect my insurance?

No, all screening reports are entirely confidential.

Is it something I can have done on the NHS?

Full cardiovascular screening is not available through the NHS. Although IVS does perform investigations for the NHS, these patients must be referred by a doctor and have symptoms which suggest underlying vascular problems.

What happens if my screen detects a problem?

Early disease can usually be treated by changes in lifestyle (smoking cessation, diet and exercise) and possibly tablets, which can be prescribed by your GP or specialist.

Severe disease may require review by a heart (cardiologist) or vascular specialist. You may choose to take your report to your GP who can refer you to a local specialist either privately or through the NHS.

We can arrange a private consultation with a relevant specialist, however some specialists still require a referral letter from your GP.