

Detection of cardiovascular disease by using SCORE method

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In order to detect the risk of cardiovascular disease as early as possible, people aged 40 to 65 can get a free SCORE* heart health check from their general practitioner, enabling them to start faster and more effective treatment if needed, which allows to improve quality of life and life expectancy.

The programme has been developed in collaboration with cardiologists and general practitioners, taking into account public health indicators. Cardiovascular diseases are the leading cause of death in Latvia, therefore prevention should play a special role.

In addition to the annual preventive check-up with a general practitioner, patients aged 40, 45, 50, 55, 60 and 65 years will have their cardiovascular risk assessed once according to the SCORE* method, preceded by a cardiovascular and smoking history, blood pressure, body mass index, total cholesterol, low and high density cholesterol, triglycerides, auscultation of the heart and carotid arteries and an electrocardiogram. The general practitioner calculates the risk of cardiovascular disease using the SCORE* method, taking into account the patient's:

gender;

age;

smoking habits;

blood pressure;

total cholesterol level.

Based on the cardiovascular risk assessment, the general practitioner will arrange for the patient to have the necessary additional investigations – echocardiography, carotid ultrasound and bicycle exercise.

In addition, detailed recommendations or algorithms have been developed for patient care and therapy, taking into account the identified risks – changes in the patient's lifestyle habits, necessary laboratory tests, drug therapy, cardiologist consultation and follow-up with a general practitioner. "This kind of 'green corridor' is a very positive development because, in close cooperation between the general practitioner and other specialists, once the risk of the disease has been identified, detailed guidelines on what to do next and where to refer the patient so that treatment is started as quickly as possible have been developed for the general practitioner," says general practitioner Liga Kozlovskā.

Cardiologist Andrejs Ērglis points out that the life expectancy of the Latvian population is already increasing, therefore it is very important to pay more attention and take care of health from the age of 40, so such a healthcare-initiated and state-funded programme to assess and prevent the risk of cardiovascular diseases can only be viewed as a positive sign.

*SCORE – method for assessing the risk of fatal cardiovascular events in the next 10 years.

<https://www.vmnvd.gov.lv/en/detection-cardiovascular-disease-using-score-method>