

RISK SCALE FOR HAVING HEART DISEASE

There is no perfect formula for calculating your risk of having heart disease. The risk scale below is a simple quick way to get a sense of your risk for having heart disease. More precise formulas exist on the Web and should be used for a more precise estimate of your risks.

Table 7.2 Risk Scale for Heart Disease

<p>Low Risk for Heart Disease Generally speaking, you are at low risk of having heart disease if you do not check a single box on the right. If you do, see below.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> I smoke. <input type="checkbox"/> I have high blood cholesterol. <input type="checkbox"/> I have high blood pressure. <input type="checkbox"/> I have diabetes. <input type="checkbox"/> I am overweight (BMI 25 or higher). <input type="checkbox"/> I have a family history of premature heart disease or vascular disease. [Premature heart or vascular disease is considered present in your family if an immediate family member (parent, brother, sister or child) had a heart or vascular event (e.g. heart attack, stroke, peripheral vascular disease) before the age of 55 (in male relatives) or before the age of 65 (in female relatives).] <input type="checkbox"/> I am 45 years or older (for men), or I am 55 years or older (for women)
<p>High Risk for Heart Disease You are at high risk of having heart disease if you check any of the boxes on the right.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> I have known heart disease or vascular disease. <input type="checkbox"/> I have diabetes. <input type="checkbox"/> I am over the age of 65 with multiple (more than one) other risk factors from the low risk group above.
<p>Medium Risk for Heart Disease You are at medium risk of having heart disease if you don't fit into either of the above two categories.</p>	

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Remember that this risk scale is simplistic and should only be used as a basic estimate. You should estimate your risk on a more rigorous scale such as the computer-based scale found at American Heart Association Web site: www.americanheart.org/gglRisk/locale/en_US/index.html?gtype=health.