



What is CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE and its risk factors?

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is a broad term for conditions affecting the heart and blood vessels. Heart attack and stroke are common acute events.

CVD risk is shaped by a combination of factors, not one factor in isolation. In general, risk increases as more factors are present and as levels are higher.

CVD risk factors can be grouped into two categories

Traditional factors:



Age



Blood pressure



Cholesterol



Diabetes



Smoking



Poor diet



Low physical activity

Additional factors:



Ethnicity



Familial hypercholesterolaemia



Chronic kidney disease

Cumulative Impact:

People may have one, a few, or many risk factors. Overall risk reflects the combination, and any mix of these factors can contribute to a person's overall CVD risk.

? Why it matters

We have moved beyond treating single risk factors in isolation. It is no longer just about cholesterol or blood pressure alone. Instead, we look at the combined effect of multiple factors to estimate overall cardiovascular risk, and this is what the Australian CVD Risk Calculator (AusCVDRisk) is designed to do. Individually, some factors might seem modest but together they can create a much higher level of risk.



Using the AusCVDRisk calculator

AusCVDRisk is a risk assessment, communication and management tool for health professionals. It considers multiple factors together to estimate a patient's overall risk and assign a risk category, which informs the recommended management pathway.

AusCVDRisk estimates the probability (percentage) of a cardiovascular event such as heart attack or stroke within five years. For example, a 10% risk means a 10% chance of an event within five years.

Recommended for:

- **Non-Indigenous** adults aged **45–79** with no known CVD.
- Adults with **diabetes** aged **35–79**.
- **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander** people aged **30–79**.
- Any age if there's a family history of **premature CVD** or **low-density lipoprotein (LDL) > 4 mmol/L** (the bad cholesterol).

www.cvdcheck.org.au/calculator



Benefits



Early detection

Identifies individuals at high risk before an event occurs.



Targeted treatment

Achieved by treating those at high risk.



Personalised care

Incorporates a broad range of factors (personal, family, socioeconomic) to refine risk estimates.

Medicare Billing Schedule (MBS) opportunities

Participation that supports preventive care and chronic disease management includes:

Assessment / Program	Eligibility	Frequency	Fee (100% rebate)*	Notes
Heart Health Assessment (Item 699)	Patients aged 30+	Annually	\$84.90	Nurse time counts toward 20-min requirement; co-bill with 715; not within 12 months of 701–707
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Health Assessment (Item 715)	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients	Every 9 months	\$247.65 + Item 10987 \$27.95 ×10 annually	Nurse time counts; co-bill with 699; not within 12 months of 701–707
Health Assessments (Items 701–707)	Specific cohorts: 40–49 diabetes risk; 45–49 chronic disease risk; 75+; aged care residents; intellectual disability	Varies by cohort	\$69.20 – \$313.60	Nurse time counts; cannot bill within 12 months of 699 or 715
Chronic Condition Management Plan (Items 965, 967, 10997)	Patients with high-risk score (chronic condition)	Structured reviews	\$156.55 + Item 10997 \$14 ×5 annually	Supports education, management, referrals to prevent CVD events
Practice Incentive Program – Indigenous Health Incentive (PIP IHI)	Eligible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients	Ongoing	Varies (plus rural loading 15–50%)	Incentive for preventive care and chronic disease management

*Fees correct at 1 November 2025. Always check MBS Online for current item numbers and rebates.

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