NHS South of Tyne and Wear is committed to raising the standard of written information for patients, their carers, people who use the NHS and the general public.

This information can be made available in another format or language on request. Please contact the Communications and PR Team Tel: 0191 529 7118 Email: mobil@sotw.nhs.uk

Production date: November 2008
Author: Health Improvement Practitioner Community Action
Code: 1108/135
Cardiovascular Disease (CVD)

What is Cardiovascular Disease (CVD)
Cardiovascular disease is caused by the narrowing of the blood vessels due to the build up of fatty deposits. This can lead to a restriction or total blockage of blood flow to the heart or brain. More commonly known as a heart attack or stroke, some people are at greater risk than others of developing cardiovascular disease.

Do you know you risk?
Having a greater numbers of risk factors puts you at greater risk of developing cardiovascular disease. Unfortunately we have risk factors that can’t be changed, however we also have risk factors that we can change and manage. Making changes to your lifestyle can significantly reduce those risk factors.

How much time will I need to put into this?
The time you can give depends on individual circumstances even if it is a couple of hours a month.

What will I get from being a volunteer?
- Opportunities to meet people from across the country
- Increased confidence
- A chance to help people in your community
- Experience of health promotion work
- Expenses to make sure you’re not out of pocket
- Satisfaction of making your community a healthier place to live.
- A chance to gain skill and qualifications through training.

For more information contact:
Project Manager
South Tyneside Primary Care Trust
Public Health
Clarendon
Windmill Way
Hebburn
Tyne and Wear  NE31 1AT
Tel: 0191 283 1194  Mobile: 0779 8652175
Help us make the people of South Tyneside become cardiovascular disease aware

Healthy Communities Collaborative

Who are we?
We are a local initiative, led by local people supported by health professionals and other community organisations. Our aim is to raise awareness of risk factors of cardiovascular disease and highlight the importance of going to your GP for early screening.

How do we do it?
We have teams of volunteers and health professionals working in targeted areas across South Tyneside. Raising awareness through events and going along to groups in the local community, these include libraries, shopping centres, pubs and clubs.

What skills do I need to contribute?
There are no particular skills you need to take part in this project. Just local knowledge and willingness to learn new skills. There are lots of different ways to contribute for example:
- Talking to local groups
- Making poster & leaflets
- Organising refreshments at events
- Taking notes at meetings
- Helping people to fill in health assessments
- Making phone calls
- Giving lifts to meetings or events

Are you aged between 40 to 75?
- The older you become the more likely fatty deposits will build up in the arteries

Are you male or female?
- Males are at greater risk than females of developing cardiovascular disease

Do you have a family History?
- If your father, mother, brother or sister developed heart disease and stroke before the age of 55 for males or 65 for females this significantly increases your risk of cardiovascular disease

Have you gone through early menopause?
- Going through early menopause also puts you at greater risk of developing cardiovascular disease

Are you of South Asian origin?
- People of South Asian origin have a greater risk of heart disease and stroke
Risk factors that can be changed or managed

**Lack of exercise**
For general health benefits you should aim to achieve a total of at least 30 minutes a day of moderate intensity physical activity on five or more day of the week. Activity can be achieved either by doing all your daily activity in one session, or through several shorter bouts of activity of 10 minutes or more. The activity can be lifestyle activity for example house work and gardening or structured sport like swimming and jogging or a combination of these.

**Smoking**
You can get support and advice to quit smoking South Tyneside freephone 0800 531 6317 or contact your GP practice or local pharmacy for further information.

**Overweight**
Reducing your weight by a couple of pounds can have positive impact on your health. Eating a balanced diet including five portions of fruit and vegetables a day is also important.

**High Blood Pressure**
It is important that when you are invited to regular Blood pressure checks with your practice nurse that you attend.

**Excess alcohol intake**
Men should not regularly drink more than 3-4 units per day, women should not regularly drink more than 2-3 units per day.
- 1 pint of strong lager = 3 units
- 1 pint of ordinary lager, bitter or cider = 2 units
- 175ml glass of wine = 2 units
- 1 alcopop = 1.5 units
- Small glass of wine 125ml = 1.5

**High Cholesterol**
Cholesterol can be lowered by medication, or by diet and physical activity. It is important that you follow advice given by your GP if you have been diagnosed with high cholesterol.

**Diabetes**
Early diagnosis of diabetes and controlling your diabetes can reduce you risk of developing heart disease or stroke. For more information on the symptoms of diabetes and managing diabetes visit www.diabetes.org.uk

For further information about cardiovascular disease contact Healthy Communities Collaborative Project Manager on 0191 283 1194