

Cardiovascular **Risk Factors**

Knowing your risks is the first step to avoiding a heart attack or stroke. Heart disease is the single biggest killer of Australians, but it can mostly be prevented. There's no one cause for heart disease, but there are risk factors that increase your chance of developing it. The more risk factors you have, the bigger your risk is of a heart attack or stroke.

Risk factors that cannot be changed include:

- Age (the older you are, the higher the risk)
- Gender (males are at higher risk)
- Ethnic background (some ethnic groups are at increased risk)
- Family history (of stroke or heart disease)

Risk factors that can be changed or improved include:

- Smoking
- High cholesterol & blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Being inactive or overweight
- Having an unhealthy diet

The best way to find out your overall risk is to see your doctor or health practitioner for a heart health check. Remember to always see a doctor or call an ambulance immediately if you develop the following symptoms which may suggest a heart attack:

- Chest pain with a sensation of pressure and/or tightness, which may radiate to other parts of the body including the neck, the iaw and the left arm.
- Sweating
- Shortness of breath
- Feeling sick (nausea) or being sick (vomiting)

We would appreciate your feedback or topics you would like to hear about at business.manager@emfp.com.au