

# The case for a joint cardiovascular and diabetes health check



**5,000**  
deaths

from CVD  
every day<sup>1</sup>



People with  
diabetes have  
life expectancy  
reduced by up  
to 10 years<sup>2</sup>



Diabetes  
costs  
**€104 BLN**

to the EU  
every year<sup>3</sup>



People with  
diabetes have a  
2-3 times  
higher cardio-  
vascular  
risk<sup>4</sup>



CVD costs  
**€210 BLN**  
to the EU  
every year<sup>5</sup>

## Early diagnosis

of CVD and diabetes is essential to prevent complications, improve health outcomes and save healthcare costs

Quick, targeted, joint cardiovascular and diabetes health checks would be a cost-effective way to save lives.

## Who should get a health check?

### The following risk factors should be considered:

- **To identify people at risk of developing diabetes:** age, BMI, physical activity, vegetable and fruit intake, medical treatment of hypertension, history of hyperglycemia and family history.
- **To identify people at risk of developing CVD\*:** family history of premature CVD, FH, CVD risk factors such as smoking, arterial hypertension, diabetes, raised lipid level, obesity, or comorbidities increasing risk of CVD.

## What would a health check include?

Measurements of the main causal and modifiable risk factors:



LDL-C



Blood  
Pressure



Smoking  
Status



HbA1c



BMI

CVD - Cardiovascular disease  
FH - Familial Hypercholesterolemia  
LDL-C - Low-density lipoprotein cholesterol  
("bad" cholesterol)

HbA1c - Glycated hemoglobin  
BMI - Body mass index

\* A systematic or opportunistic CV risk assessment in the general population in men >40 years of age and in women >50 years of age or postmenopausal with no known arteriosclerotic cardiovascular disease risk factors may be considered.



## What should Member States do?

- Maintain and strengthen actions and policies towards a health promotion strategy which include cardiovascular and diabetes health checks
- Implement targeted cardiovascular and diabetes health checks at primary care level, where most Europeans living with CVD and diabetes are managed.
- Support healthcare professionals, especially within primary care and specialist nursing settings, to ensure a better understanding of risk factors to improve early detection and diagnosis.



## What should the EU do?

- Adopt Council Conclusions that call on Member States to implement joint and targeted cardiovascular and diabetes health checks.
- Explore, through pilot projects, the implementation of health checks – e.g., through the work done within the EU4Health Joint Action on cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

<sup>1</sup> Fighting cardiovascular disease – a blueprint for EU action. June 2020. European Heart Network and European Society for Cardiology. Access link: <https://ehnheart.org/eu-action-on-cvd.html>

<sup>2</sup> IDF Atlas 10th Edition. Access link: <https://diabetesatlas.org/data/en/>

<sup>3</sup> IDF Atlas 10th Edition. Access link: <https://diabetesatlas.org/data/en/>; Health at a glance, 2019, OECD. Martin S, et al. Exp Clin Endocrinol Diabetes. 2007;115:495-501

<sup>4</sup> Avdagic-Terzic M, Babic Z, Burekovic A. Diabetes Mellitus Type 2 and Cardiovascular Diseases-Risk Assessment. Mater Sociomed. 2022

<sup>5</sup> Early detection of cardiovascular disease – an update from the European Heart Network – 2020. Access link: <https://ehnheart.org/publications-and-papers/publications/1304:cvd-screening-2021.html>