



HEART ATTACK

Bromley

Well

HEALTH FACT SHEET

Updated July 2024

What is a Heart Attack?

A heart attack is a life-threatening medical condition that occurs when the blood flow that brings oxygen to the heart is suddenly blocked, usually by a blood clot. A lack of blood to the heart may seriously damage the heart muscle.

What are the symptoms?

Don't Delay! Call 999 for ambulance immediately if you have:

- Chest pain – a sensation of tightness, heaviness, pain or a burning feeling in the centre of your chest
- Pain in other parts of the body Pain may radiate from chest to arm, jaw, back and abdomen
- Shortness of breath
- Sweating
- Feeling light-headed or dizzy
- Feeling nauseous and vomiting

What are the causes?

Coronary heart disease (CHD) is the main cause of having a heart attack. In CHD blood vessels that supply the heart with blood (coronary arteries) get clogged up with deposits of cholesterol called plaques. These plaques may burst causing a blood clot to develop. The clot may block blood supply to the heart, triggering a heart attack.

- Your risk of developing coronary heart disease is increased by:
- Smoking
- A high fat diet
- Diabetes
- High cholesterol
- High blood pressure
- Being overweight or obese

What about treatment?

Treatment is dependant on the severity of the Heart Attack. It is ideal if you are having any kind of Heart Attack for you to have an angiogram, which is a minimally invasive procedure to look at the health of the arteries to decide on treatment. Sometimes they will proceed with putting a stent in to open the arteries affected. Or they may prescribe cholesterol and blood thinning medication that can help break down the clots and prevent further build up. If you have to wait to have a stent they may prescribe blood thinning medication to help break down the clots and reduce the symptoms prior to investigation.

SELF CARE TIPS

STOP SMOKING

Smoking can increase the risk of plaque building in your arteries which is something that clots can then get caught blocking the arteries.

DIET

Certain foods can increase your risk of Coronary Heart Disease. Reducing the amount of saturated fats and eating a, high-fibre diet including whole grains and plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables can reduce your risk of developing it. It may be worth considering managing your weight if you are obese.

KEEP PHYSICALLY ACTIVE

Keeping physically active increases the efficiency of the heart and reduces blood pressure which helps with heart health. However, physical activity is also known to regulate blood sugars and increase HDL cholesterol or "good" cholesterol. Simply getting up and moving every now and then rather than living a sedentary lifestyle can help.

To register with Bromley Well:

Freephone 0808 278 7898

Or register online:

www.bromleywell.org.uk/refer

Contact Lifestyle Support direct

07985 431484 / 07985 444210

or email

enquiry@bromleywell.org.uk



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FURTHER RESOURCES

British Heart Foundation

**Help Line : 0808 802 1234 and
0300 330 3311**

Email: heretohelp@bhf.org.uk

A national charity providing information and advice for the public and for health professionals. A really useful site containing lifestyle advice, the latest research and information about tests and treatments. There are also British Heart Foundation support groups that are listed on the website.

Heart UK

National cholesterol charity providing support and advice for people concerned about cholesterol. A great website packed with advice on healthy eating and maintaining a healthy weight, including recipe ideas and diet plans.

NHS Conditions Heart Attack

NHS conditions pages contain information about the causes, symptoms and prevention and treatment of heart attacks.

NHS Wellbeing Apps

Links to NHS Wellbeing Apps designed to support you in making healthy lifestyle changes

References: NHS conditions <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/heart-attack/> British Heart Foundation <https://www.bhf.org.uk/information-support/conditions/heart-attack>

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