



RECOGNIZE YOUR HEART DISEASE RISK

Recognizing your risk of heart disease risk is the first step towards reducing your heart disease risk. In this guide, I will help you recognize and calculate your risk of heart disease

Kaustubh Dabhadkar, MD MPH FACC

dabhadkarMD.com



RECOGNIZE YOUR HEART DISEASE RISK

Recognizing your risk of heart disease risk is the first step towards reducing your heart disease risk. In this guide, I will help you recognize and calculate your risk of heart disease

KAUSTUBH DABHADKAR, MD MPH MBA FACC

I am a board-certified cardiologist with expertise in prevention and cardiac imaging. I am passionate about patient education and partnering with patients to take control of their health. I practice general cardiology in Charlotte, NC. Also, I serve as the medical director for cardiovascular imaging at Novant Health Mint Hill Medical Center. I have served as a member of the American College of Cardiology's preventive cardiology council. I enjoy playing tennis and spending time with my family in my free time.

KAUSTUBH@DABHADKARMD.COM

CONTENTS

1
ASSESS YOUR CURRENT HEALTH STATUS

2
ASSESS YOUR DIET

3
ADVANCED TESTING

4
RISK FACTORS FOR HEART DISEASE

5
BLOOD PRESSURE LOGBOOK



CHAPTER 1

ASSESS YOUR CURRENT HEALTH STATUS

ASSESS YOUR CURRENT HEALTH STATUS

Our goal will be to complete this worksheet by the end of the chapter.

(Consider printing this page to have the information easily available to use for the risk estimation tool)

Duke Activity Score Index: _____

METS score: _____

Systolic blood pressure (top number): _____

Diastolic blood pressure (bottom number): _____

Total Cholesterol: _____

HDL(Good) Cholesterol: _____

LDL(Bad) Cholesterol: _____

We assess heart-related health status using multiple metrics, often referred to as risk factors.

Step 1:

The first step is to get an understanding of your ability to tolerate activity. We use a metric called 'metabolic equivalents,' often abbreviated as METS. Duke Activity Score Index is a commonly used questionnaire to calculate this.

You can access it at the link below.

<https://dasi.dabhadkarMD.com>



Step 2:

Check your blood pressure using a home blood pressure monitoring device. Follow these tips to get an optimal reading:

- Relax for 15 minutes before checking
- Sit still in a chair with your arm resting on a desk/dining table and your upper arm at the heart's level.
- Do not check blood pressure over your clothes
- If you need a new blood pressure monitor, you can buy a reliable one from your local pharmacy or an online store. Most devices function fairly well.
- If you want recommendations, I have listed a few at the link below:

<https://devices.dabhadkarMD.com>



Step 3:

Check your lipid panel. This includes your good cholesterol, bad cholesterol, and triglycerides (a type of bad fat) levels.

- Usually, your doctor will check it during your annual physical examination.
- If you do not have access to your recent lipid panel, you can schedule one using the link below. Consider checking your HgA1C level as well to diagnose if you have diabetes

<https://tests.dabhadkarMD.com>



Step 4:

Use the information gathered above to complete the ACC ASCVD risk estimator tool.

It can be accessed at the link below:

<https://tools.acc.org/ascvd-risk-estimator-plus/#!/calculate/estimate/>





CHAPTER 2

ASSESS YOUR DIET

ASSESS YOUR DIET

We know the importance of a good diet in heart disease prevention and controlling weight. However, often most of us don't know the quality of our current diet. Researchers use dietary recall questionnaires to assess your diet quality. Unfortunately, many of these questionnaires are cumbersome to complete, with over 100 questions. So Stanford University Wellness Living Laboratory researchers designed a 12-question questionnaire to assess your diet quality.

You can complete the questionnaire below:

<https://diet.dabhadkarMD.com>



3

CHAPTER

ADVANCED RISK EVALUATION

ADVANCED RISK EVALUATION

Unfortunately, most people are diagnosed with heart disease only when they have symptoms. These symptoms are the peak of the iceberg. If the risk of heart disease is evaluated before the development of symptoms, we can effectively prevent the progression of the disease and its effects on quality of life.



Symptoms



Heart Disease



Risk Factors



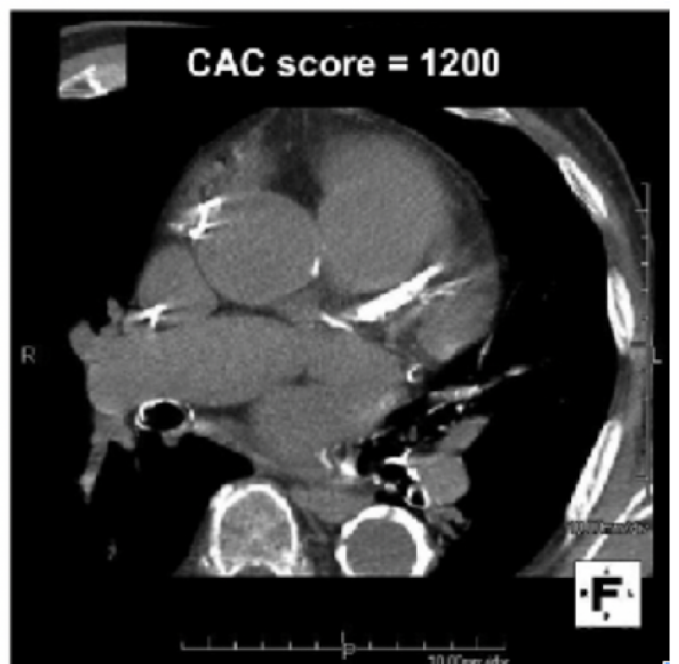
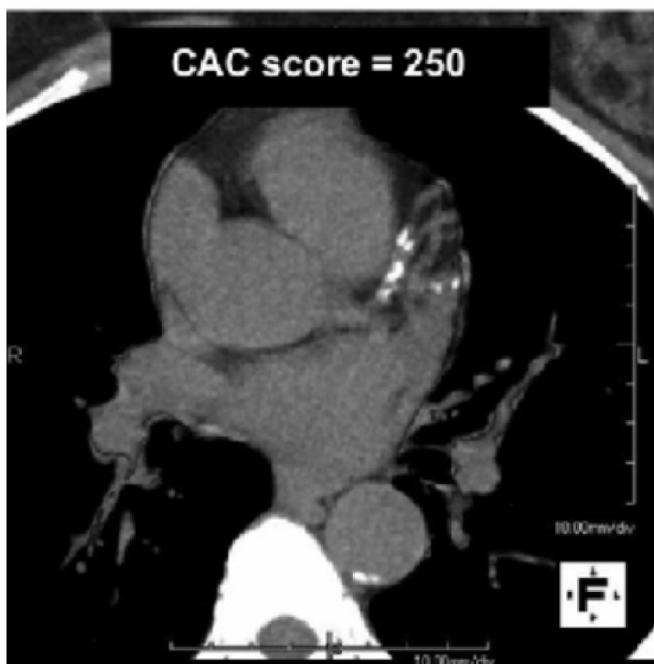
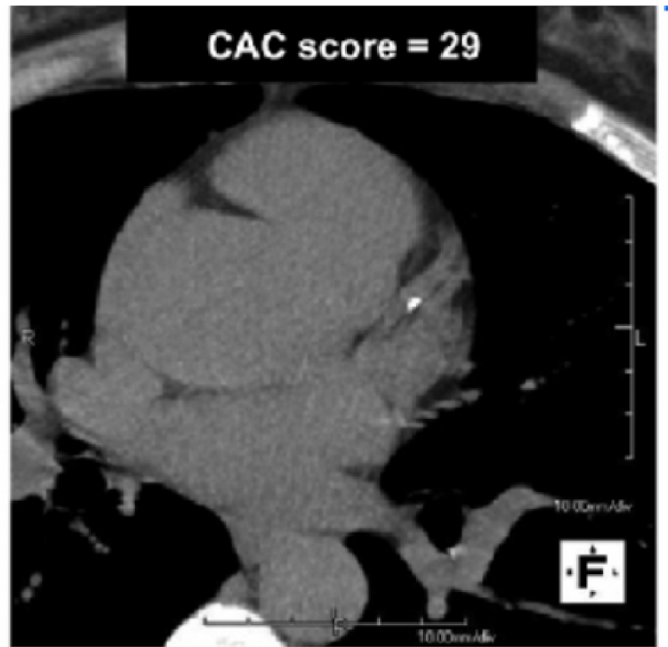
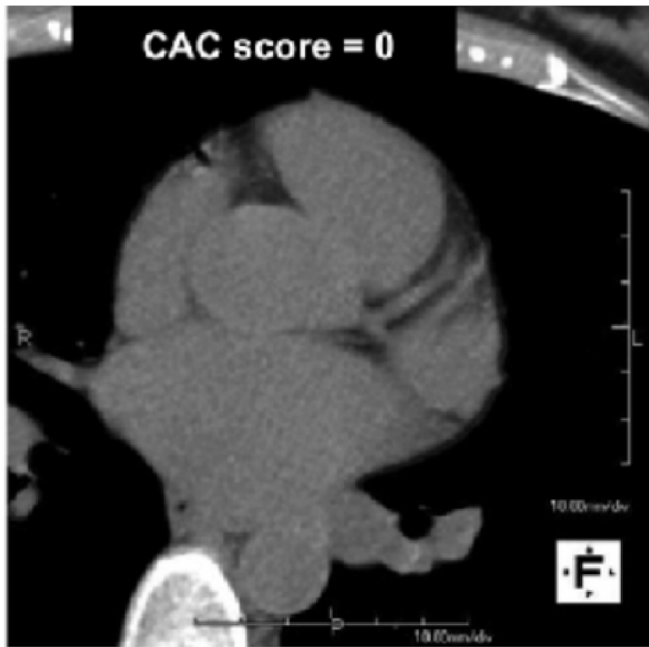
Genetics +
Other societal
risk factors

1. Coronary Artery Calcium (CAC) score:

This is a quick CT scan that detects hard plaque in the heart. The higher the plaque, the higher your score and the associated risk of a heart attack.

Few things to know about the test:

- NOT covered by insurance. In most imaging centers, the test is offered for under \$ 150
- It needs a doctor's order
- It does NOT detect soft plaque, which could cause a heart attack. So even if the score is 0, it does not rule out the future risk of heart attack
- If you already had a CT scan of the chest, a cardiologist may be able to look at it and tell you the approximate amount of plaque
- Although the test can be repeated every few years, the overall benefit of repeating the test is lower than the initial benefit



2. Carotid artery disease screening

- Carotid artery screening is conducted via a non-invasive color flow ultrasound in which a technician creates images of the carotid arteries while measuring blood flow through them.
- The results letter will indicate the degree of plaque buildup for each of your two arteries on a normal scale (no plaque identified and blood flow normal) to significant (a large amount of plaque identified, and blood flow is significantly reduced).
- Plaque buildup (atherosclerosis) can occur in any of the arteries in the body. This is one reason the simple ultrasound of the carotid arteries is so valuable: it helps people understand their risk of developing atherosclerosis in other areas of the body as well.

3. Lab testing

Your doctor often evaluates your blood cholesterol levels during your annual physical examination. However, I recommend advanced testing to evaluate risk factors early.

In the link below, I have included my affiliate link for a 50 % discount on the carotid artery testing test and additional labs that I recommend.

<https://tests.dabhadkarMD.com>



CHAPTER

4

HEART DISEASE RISK
FACTORS &
MANAGEMENT

















HEART DISEASE RISK FACTORS & MANAGEMENT



BLOOD PRESSURE CATEGORY	SYSTOLIC mm Hg (upper number)		DIASTOLIC mm Hg (lower number)
NORMAL	LESS THAN 120	and	LESS THAN 80
ELEVATED	120 – 129	and	LESS THAN 80
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 1	130 – 139	or	80 – 89
HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE (HYPERTENSION) STAGE 2	140 OR HIGHER	or	90 OR HIGHER
<u>HYPERTENSIVE CRISIS</u> (consult your doctor immediately)	HIGHER THAN 180	and/or	HIGHER THAN 120















Free online blood pressure tracker: <https://www.ccctracker.com/>

Summary of heart-harmful and heart-healthy foods/diets

 Evidence of harm; limit or avoid	 Inconclusive evidence; for harm or benefit	 Evidence of benefit; recommended
<p> Coconut oil and palm oil are high in saturated fatty acids and raise cholesterol</p> <p> Eggs have a serum cholesterol-raising effect</p> <p> Juicing of fruits/vegetables with pulp removal increases caloric concentration*</p> <p> Southern diets (added fats and oils, fried foods, eggs, organ and processed meats, sugar-sweetened drinks)</p>	<p> Sunflower oil and other liquid vegetable oils</p> <p> High-dose antioxidant supplements</p> <p> Juicing of fruits/vegetables without pulp removal*</p> <p> Gluten-containing foods (for people without gluten-related disease)</p>	<p> Extra-virgin olive oil reduces some CVD outcomes when consumed in moderate quantities</p> <p> Blueberries and strawberries (>3 servings/week) induce protective antioxidants</p> <p> 30 g serving of nuts/day. Portion control is necessary to avoid weight gain.†</p> <p> Green leafy vegetables have significant cardio-protective properties when consumed daily</p> <p> Plant-based proteins are significantly more heart-healthy compared to animal proteins</p>

Freeman, A.M. et al. *J Am Coll Cardiol.* 2017;69(9):1172-87.

An evidence-based review of the health benefits of controversial foods

 Evidence of harm; limit or avoid	 Lacking in evidence for harm or benefit	 Evidence of benefit; recommended
<p> Added sugars promote atherogenesis and increase cardiovascular disease (CVD) risk</p> <p> Energy drinks increase blood pressure, platelet aggregation, and arrhythmia risk</p>	<p> Dairy products are a source of saturated fat and salt, yet also a source of vitamins and minerals</p> <p> Fermented foods and seaweed have emerging data for CVD and risk factor improvement</p>	<p> Legumes promote heart health and are a valuable source of protein and fiber</p> <p> Moderate habitual coffee consumption reduces risk for stroke, diabetes, premature death and digestive diseases</p> <p> Tea improves artery health, reverses blood vessel dysfunction and reduces cholesterol</p> <p> Mushrooms have anti-inflammatory and antioxidant benefits</p> <p> Alcohol* has vasodilatory, antiplatelet and anti-inflammatory properties</p> <p> Plant or marine† omega-3 fatty acids reduce CVD risk and improve lipid profiles</p> <p> Vitamin B12 is an essential nutrient in the diet and should be supplemented in those who are deficient</p>

Freeman, A.M. et al. J Am Coll Cardiol. 2018;72(5):553-68.

[JACC article link](#)



CHAPTER
5
LOGBOOK



ATTEND A FREE WEBINAR

As a practicing preventive cardiologist with expertise in cardiac imaging, I use proven techniques and evidence-based medicine to reduce my patient's risk of heart disease. I use my real-world experience to go beyond the usual prevention advice and discuss using advanced heart imaging to evaluate the heart. Please subscribe to learn about my next free webinar.

S U B S C R I B E A T

dabhadkarMD.com