# Understanding Your Lipid Results and QRISK Score

## Why Have I Had a Lipid Test?

A lipid test measures the fats in your blood, including cholesterol and triglycerides. These levels help assess your risk of developing heart disease or stroke. Your results are considered along with other risk factors to calculate your QRISK score.

## What is QRISK?

QRISK is a tool recommended by NICE and used across Wales and the UK to estimate your risk of having a heart attack or stroke in the next 10 years. It uses factors like age, sex, ethnicity, blood pressure, cholesterol, smoking, diabetes, and other health conditions to calculate this risk.

## Understanding Your Lipid Results

Your blood test usually includes:
- \*\*Total cholesterol\*\* – all cholesterol in your blood. Aim: below 5 mmol/L
- \*\*LDL (‘bad’ cholesterol)\*\* – can build up in artery walls. Aim: below 3 mmol/L (or lower if high risk)
- \*\*HDL (‘good’ cholesterol)\*\* – helps remove bad cholesterol. Aim: above 1.0 mmol/L in men, 1.2 in women
- \*\*Non-HDL cholesterol\*\* – total cholesterol minus HDL. Aim: below 4 mmol/L
- \*\*Triglycerides\*\* – another type of fat. Aim: below 1.7 mmol/L when fasting

## What Do These Results Mean for Me?

- A high LDL or total cholesterol increases the risk of heart disease.
- Low HDL can also increase risk.
- Your QRISK score helps decide if you might benefit from treatment, such as lifestyle changes or medication (e.g., statins).
- A score of 10% or more usually means treatment is considered to lower your cardiovascular risk.

## What Can I Do to Improve My Lipid Levels?

- Eat a heart-healthy diet (high in fibre, vegetables, fruit, and oily fish)
- Cut down on saturated fat and processed foods
- Be active for at least 150 minutes per week
- Stop smoking and reduce alcohol intake
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Take medication if prescribed and attend follow-up blood tests

## Next Steps

- You will have been informed of your QRISK Score and your cholesterol level.
- Lifestyle advice is available on the British Heart foundation website. [Reduce your cholesterol using our top easy to act on tips - British Heart Foundation - BHF](https://www.bhf.org.uk/informationsupport/support/reducing-your-high-cholesterol)
- If you wish to read more on your QRISK score please access the following link. [QRISK: how it works and what your score means - BHF](https://www.bhf.org.uk/informationsupport/heart-matters-magazine/medical/qrisk)

If once reading this you wish to take a statin please contact the surgery for a routine prebookable appointment to discuss in more detail.