

Initiating discussions about CVD in T2D and its prevention

A guide for healthcare
professionals to discuss
atherosclerotic cardiovascular
disease with their patients
with type 2 diabetes



Initiating discussions about CVD with your T2D patients

Introduction

You play a key role in treating patients with T2D and established CVD.

This discussion guide is intended to help you engage in a clear and collaborative dialogue with your T2D patients to help them better understand their increased risk of atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease, including heart attacks and strokes, the need for risk assessment and how certain treatments may help reduce their risk.

How to get the most out of your discussion

Ask

Use the suggested questions in this guide to help initiate a conversation with your patient.

Discuss

Guide your patients along their path, particularly on topics they don't understand.

1. Explaining cardiovascular disease to your patient

These suggested questions allow you to open a dialogue with your patient to gauge their current understanding of CVD in T2D and how it increases the risk of heart attacks and strokes.

The suggested discussion points highlight key information you may wish to share with your patient to help them understand the underlying cause of CVD.

Ask

- What do you know about cardiovascular disease?
- Do you know that cardiovascular disease increases your risk of heart attacks and strokes over time?

Discuss

- CVD affects your heart and blood vessels
- The buildup of plaque over time could obstruct the flow of blood to the heart and brain
- This obstruction of blood flow could lead to heart attacks and strokes

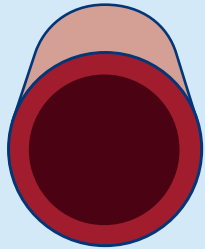
Time for a heart-to-heart

Let's start with a quick note on terminology:

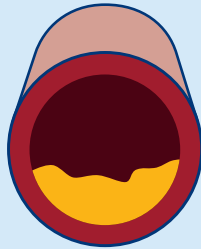
Cardio means related to the heart. **Vascular means** related to the blood vessels. Thus, cardiovascular disease is simply the name given to a class of diseases affecting the heart and blood vessels.

How risk of heart attacks and stroke increases

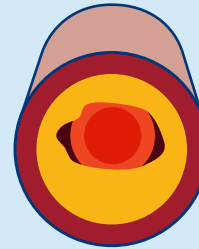
Fatty material (sometimes referred to as 'plaque') can build up and obstruct blood flow in your blood vessels (known as 'atherosclerosis'). Over time, the risk of actual damage to the heart and brain goes up and may take the form of a heart attack or stroke.¹



Healthy vessel
supplying the blood
with oxygen-rich blood.



Fatty material narrowing
the vessel and increasing
the blood pressure...



... leading to increased
risk of irregular heartbeat,
heart attack or stroke.

Reference:

1. National Institute of Health. Atherosclerosis. 2021. [online]. Available from: <https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health-topics/atherosclerosis> Last accessed: June 2022.

2.

Explaining the increased risk of heart attacks and strokes to your patients

These suggested questions allow you to open a dialogue with your patient to gauge their current understanding of their risk of heart attacks and strokes.

The suggested discussion points highlight key information you may wish to share with your patient to help raise their awareness and understanding of their risk.

Ask

- Do you know that T2D could increase your risk of heart attacks and strokes?
- Do you know that having diabetes increases your risk of heart attacks and strokes?

Discuss

- Heart attacks and strokes are a greater risk if you have T2D – even if your blood sugar is well controlled
- Heart attacks and strokes happen over a decade earlier in people with T2D and are more severe than in people without

Type 2 diabetes increases your risk of serious cardiovascular events like heart attacks and strokes

- Heart attacks and strokes are up to four times more likely to occur in people with type 2 diabetes, even if blood sugar is well controlled^{1,2}
- Heart attacks and strokes are the number one cause of death and disability in people with type 2 diabetes³
- Heart attacks and strokes in people with type 2 diabetes occur over a decade earlier, and are more severe, compared with people without type 2 diabetes^{3,4}



References:

1. Almdal T, et al. *Archives Intern Med* 2004; 164:1422–1426. 2. Fox CS, et al. *J Am Med Assoc* 2004; 292:2495–2499.
3. Low Wang CC, et al. *Circulation* 2016; 133:2459–2502. 4. Echouffo-Tcheugui JB, et al. *Eur Heart J*. 2018;39:2376–2386.

3.

Explaining the need for early risk assessment

These suggested questions allow you to open a dialogue with your patient to help them understand the urgency of early risk assessment.

The suggested discussion points highlight key information you may wish to share with your patient to help them understand the need for early assessment of their risk.

Ask

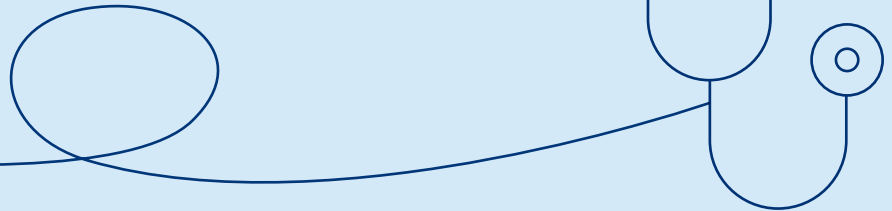
- What do you know about your risk of heart attacks and strokes?
- Do you know that early assessment is important to help identify your risk of heart attacks and strokes?

Discuss

- Having T2D puts you at an increased risk of heart attacks and strokes
- Early assessment and management could help reduce the risk of heart attacks and strokes in people with T2D

Cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes

- Cardiovascular disease can be a 'hidden' problem for people with type 2 diabetes. Plaque can build up silently within the blood vessels for years without you knowing¹
- American Diabetes Association guidelines recommend that cardiovascular risk factors should be assessed and monitored at least annually in people with type 2 diabetes²



References:

1. Libby P, et al. *Nat Rev Dis Primers* 2019;5:56. 2. Standards of Medical Care in Diabetes - 2022. *Diabetes Care* 2022;45(Supp. 1):S17-S38.

4.

Explaining how risk of heart attacks and strokes could be reduced

The suggested discussion points highlight key information you may wish to share with your patient to help them understand how to reduce their risk of heart attacks and strokes, including initiating glucose-lowering treatments with proven CV benefits.

Ask

- What do you know about reducing your risk of heart attacks and strokes?
- Do you know about diabetes medication that can help reduce your risk of heart attacks and strokes?

Discuss

- Healthy lifestyle choices could help your patient reduce their risk of heart attacks and strokes
- Keeping your diabetes and its comorbidities under control could help reduce the risk of heart attacks and strokes
- There are diabetes medications with proven benefits that could help your patient reduce their risk of heart attacks and strokes

You can play an active role in reducing your risk of heart attacks and strokes¹⁻⁴



Diet: Follow your healthcare provider's advice for a healthy balanced diet



Cholesterol: In addition to a healthy diet, your healthcare provider may recommend treatment to maintain healthy cholesterol levels



Physical activity: Your healthcare provider can help you plan how to incorporate regular exercise into your routine



Blood pressure: Alongside a healthy diet and exercise, your healthcare provider may recommend a blood pressure reduction treatment



Body weight: Try to achieve and maintain a healthy bodyweight



Blood sugar control: Monitor your blood sugar level as advised by your healthcare provider



Smoking: If you smoke, your healthcare provider can help you with advice and support to quit



Medication: Some diabetes medications could reduce your risk of heart attacks and strokes

References:

1. Yusuf S, et al. *Lancet*. 2020; 395:795–808. 2. Herrington W, et al. *Circ Res*. 2016; 118:535–546. 3. Standards of Medical Care in Diabetes - 2022. *Diabetes Care* 2022;45(Supp.1):S17-S38. 4. Buse JB, et al. *Diabetes Care*. 2020;43:487-493.