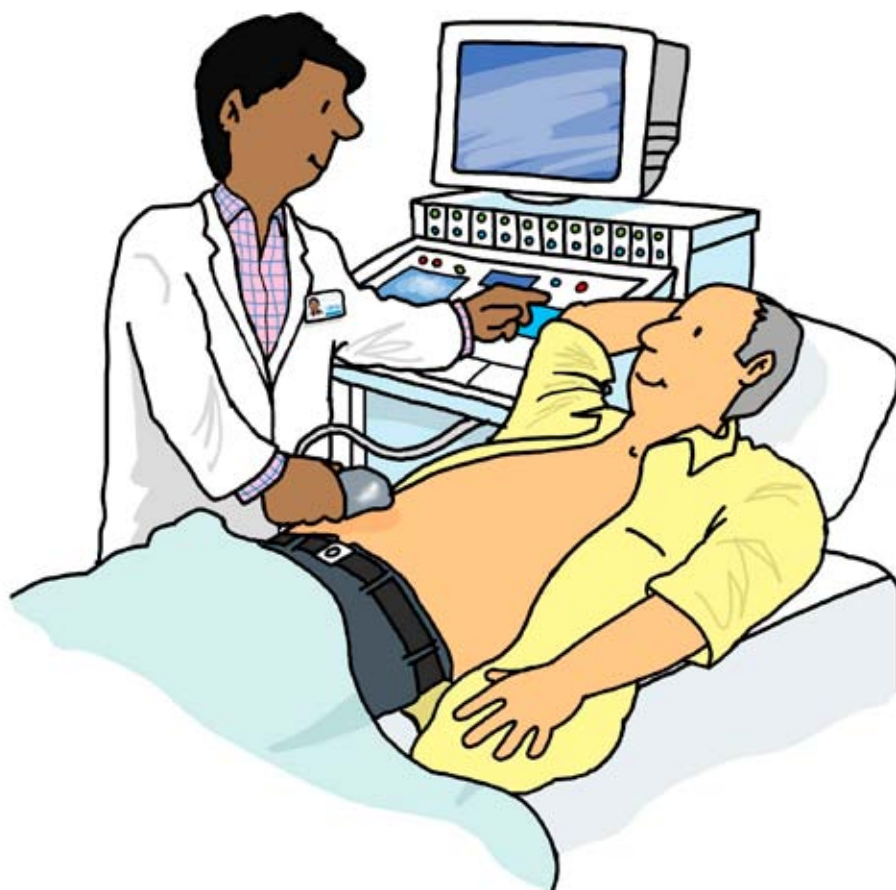
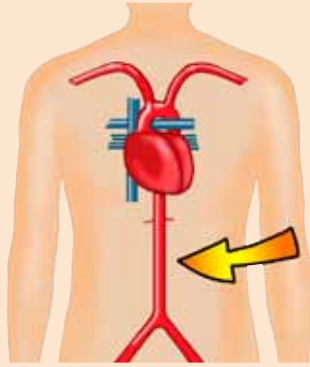


Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA) Screening

Information about a health test for men who are 65 or older

Easy read



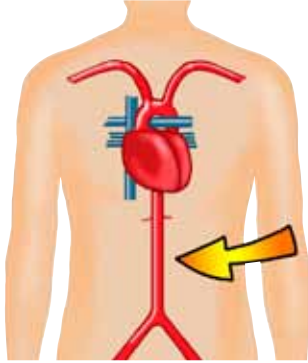


This leaflet tells you about a free test you can have to check if you have a health problem called an **abdominal aortic aneurysm**. This is called **AAA** for short.

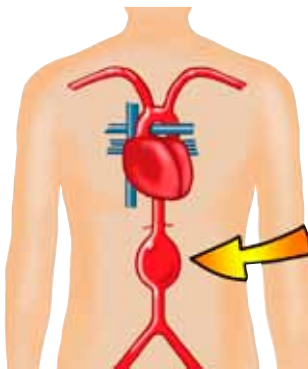


The test is called **AAA Screening**. It is for men who are 65 or older.

What is an abdominal aortic aneurysm?



The **aorta** is a big blood vessel that takes blood from your heart round your body.



As some people get older, the aorta can get weak and swell up. This sort of swelling is called an **abdominal aortic aneurysm**.



Men aged 65 and older are most likely to get this sort of **aneurysm**.

Is an aneurysm serious?



If you have a **large aneurysm** it could be **very** serious. If the wall of your **aorta** gets very weak it could burst. If this happens, you would probably die.



If you have a **small aneurysm**, it is **not** dangerous. But it is still important to keep checking that your aneurysm is not getting any bigger.

Why is it important to have the test?



You cannot usually tell if you have an **aneurysm**. You will **not** usually feel any pain or notice anything different.



The NHS offers **AAA Screening tests** so we can find aneurysms early and keep checking them. Or we can treat the aneurysm if we need to.



Checking helps us to make sure an aneurysm will not give you serious problems in the future.

Why have we asked you to come for a test?



You are more likely to have an **abdominal aortic aneurysm** if you are a man over 65 years old. So the NHS asks all men to come for a test in the year they become 65.

Who is most at risk?

1 in 25

About 1 in 25 men in England between 65 and 74 years old have this sort of aneurysm.



Men are 6 times more likely to have this sort of aneurysm than women.



Your chance of having an aneurysm is more if:

- you smoke;



- you have high blood pressure;



- your brother, sister or parent has had an abdominal aortic aneurysm.

What will happen at the test?



We use a simple test called an ultrasound scan. The test usually takes less than 10 minutes. The test does not hurt.



For the test you lie down and lift up or open your shirt. You do not need to undress.

We put a cool jelly on your tummy and move a small scanner over your skin. This shows us a picture of your aorta on a screen and we can measure it.



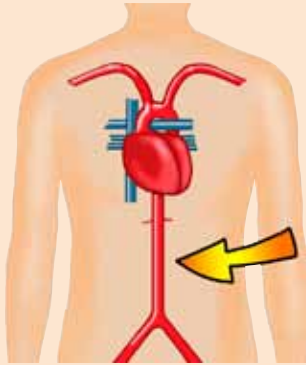
Before the test we will tell you about the test and give you the chance to ask questions. We will also ask to keep information about you on our computer system.



We will tell you your result straight away and also tell your own doctor.

The results

There are 3 results you could have from the test:



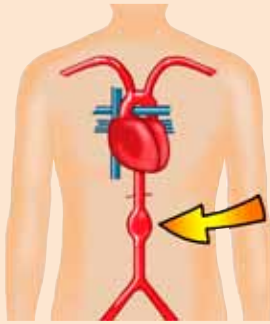
Normal

Normal means you do not have an aneurysm.

You will not need any treatment or checks afterwards.



Most men will have a normal result. If you have a normal result it is very unlikely you will get a large aneurysm later.



Small aneurysm

If we find a **small aneurysm** it means that your aorta is a bit wider than normal.



You will not need treatment now. But it is important to keep checking in case your aneurysm gets bigger.



If you have a small aneurysm we will ask you to come back for regular tests. The tests will be every 3 months or once a year. It will depend on how big your aneurysm is.

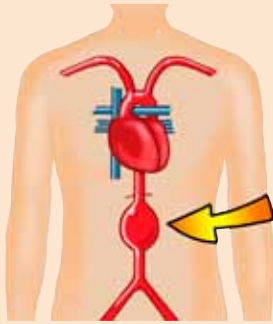


We will also give you advice on what you can do to help stop your aneurysm getting bigger.



Your own doctor may also give you pills or change medicines you take already. They may also check your blood pressure.

Many men with a **small aneurysm** never need any treatment.



Large aneurysm

- If we find a **large aneurysm** it means that your aorta is much wider than normal.



- If you have a large aneurysm we will arrange for you to have more tests and to talk to a special doctor about treatment. The treatment will usually be an operation.



- Treatment for large aneurysms usually stops the problem. But there are some risks which the doctor will tell you about.

1 in 100

- Only 1 in 100 men who are screened will have a large aneurysm.

What do I need to know about the test?



There is no risk from the test itself.



The test is a very good way to find out early if you have an **abdominal aortic aneurysm**. This could save your life.

What about men over 65?



If you are over 65 and have never been asked to come for **AAA Screening**, you can ask your **local screening centre** for a test.

Where can I get more information?

To get more information you can:



- Phone your **Local screening centre** using the number on the letter we sent you.



- Visit the **NHS AAA Screening Programme** at www.aaa.screening.nhs.uk



- Contact **The Circulation Foundation** charity that supports people with problems with their blood vessels, at www.circulationfoundation.org.uk or phone **020 7304 4779**.



- You can also talk to your own doctor.



Screening programmes

Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm

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Produced by COI for the NHS
401590/C 1p December 2010