

15 - Risk factors

Since diabetes, by damaging the arteries, increases the risk of ischaemia and myocardial infarction, stroke, angina and peripheral arterial disease in the legs, it is important not to add other risk factors and, if any exist, to try to control them properly.

Obesity and high blood pressure



Excess weight and obesity should be avoided by achieving and maintaining an ideal weight by eating a healthy diet and exercising every day.



High blood pressure (>140/90 mmHg) increases the risks for the heart, brain, kidneys and eyes.



It is therefore important to reduce the salt in your diet, exercise every day and follow the therapy you have been prescribed properly.

Cholesterol and triglycerides



High cholesterol, especially LDL (<70 mg) should be kept under control by eating a healthy diet, exercising regularly and taking any medication (statins) prescribed.



As triglycerides also damage the arteries, it is important to limit your intake of alcohol and sweet foods that are rich in fats.

Smoking



Smoking considerably increases cardiovascular risks and the heart attack risk, as well as the risk of cancer, particularly of the lungs and pancreas. So, the first thing to do, if you are a smoker, is give up now!

How to reduce the risks



Medicines are important, but they cannot replace the beneficial effect of a healthy diet,



...combined with regular exercise. Walk for 30 minutes every day



...or chose a different form of exercise that suits your abilities, at least 2-3 times a week.