

Burwell Surgery Patient Participation Group (PPG)

Free Health Checks

Happy New Year! Those of us who finished the last of the festive treats with a resolution to lead a healthier lifestyle in 2025 might be interested to know about the free NHS Health Check service.

Who is eligible for a free Health Check?

The Health Check is for people who are aged 40 to 74 and it is targeted at those of us who do not already have a pre-existing condition (these patients are already being monitored on a regular basis).

Why have a Health Check?

By having a Health Check we can lower our risk of getting conditions that affect the heart and blood vessels, such as heart disease, stroke and kidney disease. Many of the warning signs for these conditions, such as high blood pressure and high cholesterol, do not have symptoms.

The Health Check helps us to find out if we are at risk of getting these conditions so we can take action to improve our health. This could include making lifestyle changes or taking medicines.

The risk factors assessed during the health check are often shared by other conditions, including type 2 diabetes, preventable cancers and respiratory illness. A Health Check helps us to reduce the chance of getting these conditions too. Dementia and heart disease also share common risk factors.

What is checked and how long does it take?

The Health Check takes about 20 to 30 minutes and usually includes: measuring your height and weight; measuring your waist; a blood pressure test; a cholesterol test; and possibly a blood sugar level test, which is usually a finger-prick blood test. You may be asked to have a blood test at or before the Health Check. You'll also be asked some questions about your health, age and ethnicity, since these could all have a bearing on risk.

When do I get my results?

You'll usually be told your NHS Health Check results during the appointment. You'll be given your cardiovascular risk score of developing a heart or circulation problem, such as heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes or kidney disease, over the next 10 years. Those receiving the Health Check are then invited back for another Health Check every 5 years.

How do I get my free Health Check?

If you think you are eligible for a Health Check, but have not already been invited, contact the Surgery via AskMyGP (or by phone if that is not an option) to get booked in. The Surgery does a number of Health Checks directly, but when it is struggling for capacity it will refer you to Healthy You which undertakes free Health Checks across the county. **You can also self-refer to Healthy You at <https://healthyyou.org.uk/services/health-checks/>.**

Next PPG meeting – all welcome – why not join us online if you can't make it in person!

The next meeting of the PPG is at 6.30pm on Tuesday 15th April 2025 at Burwell Day Centre – all welcome. If you would like to attend the PPG for the first time, or if you can't attend in person but can join via Microsoft Teams, then please contact cpicb.burwellsurgery.admin@nhs.net