

### 3.21 Cardiovascular health - Abdominal aortic aneurysm screening

Warren aged 65 wants to know whether he should attend for the aortic aneurysm scan that he has been invited for.

Provide: You've been asked to have an ultrasound scan on your tummy to check that you don't have an aortic aneurysm.

Elicit: Have you ever hear of an aneurysm?

Warren: I've never heard of an aneurysm.

Provide: Sometimes the wall of the main artery behind your tummy can be weak and bulge out at the weakest point. This bulge or balloon is called an aneurysm. ~~(You may have seen one on an inner tube.)~~

Elicit: Are you with me so far?

Warren: I sometimes get those on my bike inner tubes.

Provide: The main worry is that the balloon can burst, which can be serious and even fatal. This is more common the bigger the aneurysm is. If this happens the main symptom is very severe tummy or back pain. Most people don't get any symptoms until it is too late so there is now a screening programme to try to pick aneurysms up early and offer an operation. Most people will never get an aneurysm but you are much more likely to get one if you have high blood pressure, diabetes or high cholesterol.

Elicit: OK?

Warren: Why has my wife not had an invite?

Provide: It's more common in men.