**Worrying about your health 'increases the risk of heart disease'**

* [**TOM POWELL**](http://www.standard.co.uk/author/tom-powell)
* Friday 4 November 2016

**Worrying about your health may actually increase the risk of heart disease, new research has found.**

A study of 7,000 people over 12 years showed that those who fret about their health are around 70% more likely to develop [heart disease](http://www.standard.co.uk/topic/heart-disease).

The [Norwegian](http://www.standard.co.uk/topic/norway) research also showed that those fit and healthy people with the highest levels of ‘health anxiety’ were the most likely to suffer from a fatal heart attack.

Scientists believe the extra stress put on the body by hypochondriacs is not healthy in the long term.

Writing in the British Medical journal, the research team from the University of Bergen said: “Persons with high levels of health anxiety stay alert with the intention to better ‘control’ and ‘detect’ early signs of severe diseases.”

But this “monitoring and frequent check-ups of symptoms” does not reduce their heart risk, the scientists claimed.

Rather, the “persistent and exaggerated attention to symptoms” risks “placing strain on bodily systems and, in turn, increasing the risk of cardiovascular diseases”.