**BBC Radio 4**

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a researcher be wanting to discuss for weeks now on pessimism and your risk of developing coronary heart disease now call me a pessimist but I'm already getting is not be good news not so this is a study carried out in Finland it said an 11 year long study and they started off just taking general measures of health and social economic status education and so on but they also took measures of optimism and pessimism so they ask questions like in uncertain times usually expect best that would be an optimist one or if something can go wrong for me it will now be pessimistic on

what they found was that about throughout the study about 5 % people died of coronary heart disease and one of the really strong independent predictors of that was the people's level of pessimism and so those people that had more pessimistic outlook on life were more likely to die of coronary heart disease on why might that be why could think that things might go wrong be linked to talk with something like heart disease seem so different yet war one as the series has been put forward in the paper is that people who are pessimistic they have quite fatalistic of approach to life and to their behaviours and they don't bother to engage in health related behaviours they don't improve the diet they don't increase exercise because they just assume that the worst is gonna happen interesting in this study optimism was not something that particularly protected them it was about not being pessimistic rather than being about been optimistic not surprised to see that occurs if you think of a famous studies

that was a study in the states on with lots of nuns who wrote letters about why they want to be a nun when they're only 21 22 and then those analysed decades and decades later and the course of the nuns who used the highest number of positive hopeful statements when they wrote these letters were likely to live longer than the others which which seems to run counter to the study said there seems a optimism is a good thing keeps alive long well I'd like to think optimism is a good thing cos I think people have argued I'm pathologically optimistic myself but and I guess this is just one study and it's one specific health related condition and so maybe in this case optimism may in some ways made it complacent I guess I'm in relation to the specific health related behaviors it's it's about not being pessimistic rather than being hope for but what can you do about that and that is bad news of this mrs and as a naked about that if you pessimistic just are you sure personality estuary a lot and er no specific looking at ongoing injury personality traits so

1st that might look fairly negative for present a special guest the important thing is that if somebody has got pessimistic outlook you can specifically target their behavior and say persuade the may be that the what that change in behavior will make a difference and will give them a better life expectancy that's Katherine and do stay with us