

# When Should You Have a Baseline Cardiac Examination?

**I**t is not a bad idea for all adults to have base line Cardiac examination. It is especially important for anyone with symptoms that may suggest heart disease, such as chest discomfort, shortness of breath and palpitation or if you have risk factors for heart disease or if you have family history heart disease.

The purpose of a baseline cardiac exam is to identify any risk factors that increases your risk of developing heart attack, or stroke, so that you can take steps to modify your risk before it is too late. Heart disease takes many years to develop, so treating risk factors early can reduce the likelihood you will have heart attack in the future.

In a baseline cardiac examination, your doctor will take a complete personal history, family, history of heart disease, and find out whether you have any symptoms of heart disease and also discuss any risk factors you have. Then the doctor will do a complete physical examination including checking your Blood Pressure and in some cases may do an electrocardiogram

Doctor may also order the blood tests, including your total cholesterol, triglycerides, HDL cholesterol, and LDL cholesterol. He may check your blood sugar. It is not a bad idea to have Lipo protein a level done at least once and also obtain high sensitive C reactive protein level (CRP) which is a marker for inflammation.

He also checks your height and weight to assess your BMI and also check your waist circumference to determine if this puts you at risk. He may also check your neck arteries to make sure that you don't have any evidence for blockage of the carotid arteries and also check the pulses in your feet to make sure that you don't have peripheral arterial disease.

Your doctor also discuss your diet, eating habits, sleep, habits, and exercise, and also ask whether you smoke or not and also use any illicit drugs and over the counter medication. Based on these results, he may recommend you make some lifestyle changes or prescribe medication to lower your risk of heart disease.

Your primary care physicians are able to do a baseline cardiac examination, but many simply do not have the time. My advice to you all is to have a baseline cardiac examination either through your primary care physician or a cardiologist. Women are not exception.

1/3

---

**Dr Keshava Aithal**

*ಊಃ 8 Double o*