



# Health Fact Sheet

## Homocysteine

One in two people in Britain have high homocysteine levels in their blood, and this can be one of the most important indicators of your body's biochemical health and your risk of degenerative diseases.

### What is Homocysteine?

Homocysteine is produced from the naturally occurring amino acid methionine and is turned into one of two beneficial substances – SAME or glutathione. However, if you don't have enough B vitamins in your diet, this process can't take place and the homocysteine remains in your blood unconverted and levels start to build dangerously high. One in 10 people have an inherited genetic mutation which makes them more likely to have high homocysteine levels.

An accumulation of homocysteine in the blood increases the risk of acquiring over 50 diseases, including diabetes, heart attack, stroke, Alzheimer's, depression and even some cancers.

It has been discovered that homocysteine can damage not only your arteries, but your brain and your DNA as well, and this is why it is such an important indicator of disease.

### What is a Safe Level?

It is thought that a level of 6 mmol/l or under of homocysteine is ideal, and for every 5 point increase in this level the risk of death from all causes goes up by 50%. Current research indicates that your homocysteine levels are an accurate indicator of how long you are likely to live.

### What Can I Do About It?

If your level is too high, this might seem like a gloomy prognosis, but.... and here's the good news..... high homocysteine levels are a result of not being properly nourished and are therefore easily reversed in a matter of a few weeks by addressing your diet.

In order to do this you need to pay attention to the following:

- Cut back on tea and/or coffee to 1 cup a day
- Don't add salt to your food (and avoid hidden salt)
- Have *at least* 5 servings of fruit and vegetables each day
- Limit your consumption of alcohol to no more than 4 glasses of wine or 2 pints of beer a week
- Eat no more than 4 servings of lean meat a week
- Eat fish (steamed or baked, not fried) 3 times a week
- Eat pulses 5 times a week, and/or soya-based foods
- Have a clove of garlic each day or a garlic supplement

- Reduce stress and stop smoking

You will also need to supplement the following:

Either:

A high strength multi-vitamin each day – this needs to give a minimum of 10 mcg of vitamins A, C, D, and E, magnesium, zinc, selenium and chromium, and 25mcg of the main B vitamins.  
With 1 g of Vitamin C

Or:

There are supplements which combine the specific homocysteine-lowering nutrients into one tablet and include betaine (TMG) with the B vitamins, which helps to detoxify homocysteine quickly. This is the most cost effective way to directly tackle homocysteine.

### **In Conclusion**

High homocysteine levels can greatly increase your risk of a wide variety of serious illnesses. However, it is caused by a lack of the right nutrient in the diet and is therefore quite quickly and simply addressed. If your doctor will not do the test you can have it done privately. A simple blood test costing in the region of £75 can alert you to the problem, and then the solution is straightforward.