

# AAA SCREENING

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



### What is AAA?

AAA stands for Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm – a bulge or swelling in the aorta, which is the main blood vessel that runs from the heart down through the chest and stomach.

### Who should be screened for AAA?

Men aged 65 and over are most at risk of AAAs. This is why men are invited for screening to check for an AAA when they're 65.

### Why should I attend screening?

An AAA can be dangerous if it isn't spotted early on. It can get bigger over time and could burst, causing life-threatening bleeding.

### Are there any symptoms?

Not obvious ones but some people may experience a sensation like a heartbeat in the stomach, or stomach or lower back pain that won't go away.

### What will happen if an AAA bursts?

If an AAA bursts it can cause sudden, severe pain in the stomach or lower back; dizziness; sweaty, pale and clammy skin; fast heartbeat and shortness of breath; and fainting or passing out.

### Am I at more risk if I smoke?

Yes – if you smoke or used to smoke you are up to 15 times more likely to get an AAA.

### What if I have high blood pressure?

High blood pressure can double your risk of getting an AAA.

### What if a relative has an AAA? Does this make me more vulnerable?

If your parent, sibling or child has an AAA you are about four times more likely to get an AAA.

### What if I am a man over 65 and I haven't yet been screened before?

You can request a test by directly contacting your local AAA Screening Service at

[www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/Abdominal-aortic-aneurysm-screening/LocationSearch/1910](http://www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/Abdominal-aortic-aneurysm-screening/LocationSearch/1910)