

SCREENING Familial Hypercholesterolemia (FH)



LE GOUVERNEMENT
DU GRAND-DUCHÉ DE LUXEMBOURG
Ministère de la Santé
et de la Sécurité sociale

Direction de la santé

What is Familial Hypercholesterolemia?

Familial Hypercholesterolemia is one of the most common inherited diseases. It affects about 1 in 300 people.

It is a disease in which genetic mutations cause too high cholesterol levels in the blood, and more specifically LDL (Low-Density Lipoprotein) cholesterol (bad cholesterol) levels.



The Consequences of Hypercholesterolemia

Exposure to abnormally high levels of LDL cholesterol is not good for your health. This causes damage to the blood vessels: cholesterol accumulates on the walls of the blood vessels, which causes them to narrow.

As they are exposed to higher cholesterol levels since birth, people with Familial Hypercholesterolemia are at higher risk of developing cardioneurovascular complications such as myocardial infarction, stroke, etc. at a young age (often before the age of 40).

Why screen children?

Familial Hypercholesterolemia is a hereditary disease that is passed down from generation to generation. The probability that a child will inherit this disease from one of his affected parents is 50%.

But if detected and treated early, these cardioneurovascular diseases can be prevented. Medical treatment is available and approved from the age of 6. Hence the importance of screening children early enough.

If hypercholesterolemia is detected in a child, his parents can be screened as they may not even know they have this disease. This will ensure that they will also benefit from medical care.

How is Familial Hypercholesterolemia diagnosed?



The diagnosis of Familial Hypercholesterolemia is made in two stages:

- » First, the total cholesterol level and LDL cholesterol in the blood is measured by taking few drops of blood by a superficial prick in the finger.
- » In a second step, if the cholesterol level is too high, a referral to the reference center in Luxembourg will be proposed where further investigations will be carried out.

Based on the results of cholesterol test, family history and genetic analysis, the diagnosis of Familial Hypercholesterolemia will be made.

When will the test be carried out?

As cholesterol levels are already high during childhood for people with Familial Hypercholesterolemia, screening can be considered from an early age.

The Health Department is working with the CHL to organize screenings for Familial Hypercholesterolemia in children aged 18 months.

This screening is offered free of charge to all children aged 18 months.

An invitation letter will be sent by post to the child's parents which will allow them to book an appointment for the screening.



This screening is free of charge, fully funded by the Ministry of Health and Social Security

How will you get the results?

Your child's blood sample will immediately be analyzed, and you will be informed directly of the results by the nursing staff:

» If cholesterol levels are mildly high, you will be notified and given a recommendation to have your child seen by his general practitioner.

» If the cholesterol level is significantly high, you will be informed and advised to consult your general practitioner or directly the reference center in Luxembourg (DECCP, Kannerklinik, CHL). Additional tests will be carried out, treatment will be explained and offered to you if necessary.

Do you still have questions?



This flyer should address any question you may have. However, it does not replace information given by your pediatrician, general practitioner, or health professionals.

The screening tests' results can be critically important for your child's health and future. Carrying out this test is not mandatory, but it is highly recommended.

DATA PROTECTION

Your child's data is processed by the State Information Technology Centre when sending the invitation before the screening and by the CHL when carrying out the screening, communicating the results and producing the indicators to evaluate the effectiveness of the screening.

If you have any questions about data protection or about the invitation, please send an email to the Health Directorate to: medecine-preventive@ms.etat.lu. If your question is about the screening, please address your email to the CHL to: endped@chl.lu.



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