

This month...

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Did you know?

Heart disease and stroke are the world's leading causes of death, with around 17.1 million deaths each year.

At least 80% of premature deaths from heart disease and stroke could be avoided with a healthy diet, physical exercise and abstaining from tobacco.

Here at Preventicum we screen for a range of risk factors including those for heart disease and stroke. For further information please [contact us](#).

"Welcome to the September issue of Preventicum E-news."

This month we are focusing on one of the most common genetic disorders in the UK, [haemochromatosis \(GH\)](#), which as many as 1 in 200 people are likely to be at risk of developing.

We are also highlighting [World Heart Day](#) on 26th September, which calls on everyone to take responsibility for their own heart health encouraging a healthy diet, physical activity and saying no to tobacco.

*Please remember to **forward** E-news to your friends, family and colleagues!"*

Dr Garry Savin, Medical Director



Haemochromatosis (GH)

Haemochromatosis (GH) is a genetic iron overload disorder; a condition where the body contains too much iron. Although not uncommon, few people are aware of the condition. It is caused by defective genes inherited from both parents which cause the body to absorb excess amounts of iron from food.



Tip of the month

Sexual Health Week
13-19 September 2010
is the first ever national campaign to focus on sexually transmitted infections (STIs) in people over 50.

Many people over 50 having sex with a new partner do not think safer sex applies to them and STIs are now making a comeback in a new generation.

Chlamydia cases in the UK rose by 72 per cent in men and women aged 45-64 between 2002 and 2006 and there was a 93 per cent increase in gonorrhoea in women aged 45-64 between 1999 and 2008.

At Preventicum we offer a discreet screening service for STIs. Please contact us in complete confidence for details on 020 7605 6900 or [email us](#).

Watch our movie



In the UK, about 250,000 people have a genetic predisposition to haemochromatosis (GH) but only around 5,000 are currently diagnosed. However, there is evidence that many times that number have tissue damage and disease caused by iron overload. Iron is an essential mineral and the body normally monitors its daily requirement and absorbs it from food in the necessary amounts. People with haemochromatosis (GH) have a fault in this control process and, over time, they absorb and accumulate too much iron in their body.

Iron build-up can take many years and any excess iron is deposited in the liver, the pancreas, other endocrine glands and the heart. Left untreated, it may result in irreparable organ damage, including cirrhosis of the liver, late onset diabetes or cardiomyopathy (heart damage). Often there can be significant iron overload long before symptoms appear or the condition is detected, since it is an insidious condition.

Iron overload can cause a wide range of non-specific symptoms and clinical findings, such as unexplained weakness or fatigue, bronze skin pigmentation, abnormal liver function, joint pains/arthritis (particularly if in the first and second knuckles), diminished sex drive or impotence, diabetes or abnormal heart rhythms.

Haemochromatosis (GH) can be screened for by simple blood tests, which are included in all of our comprehensive Preventicum Check-Ups. If iron markers are raised, we can arrange further genetic tests to look for the genes that are associated with haemochromatosis. Once diagnosis is confirmed, it is important to begin treatment as soon as possible to avoid further iron build-up and possible organ damage. We can also arrange this through our network of highly experienced specialists. The treatment, known as venesection therapy or phlebotomy, involves the regular removal of blood to return the iron stores to normal levels. Symptoms will improve but the treatment will not cure conditions such as diabetes or cirrhosis that were already present prior to commencing the therapy. This emphasises the need for early diagnosis to prevent irreversible organ damage.

If you would like further information about this condition or would like to arrange a Preventicum Check-Up or specific blood tests for haemochromatosis, please [contact us](#).

Client Testimonials

"I would highly recommend Preventicum if you want to take an active interest in your long-term health. They offer a thorough health check that gave me the ultimate peace of mind."

Matt Dawson MBE, Ex-England rugby player and Patron of Beating Bowel Cancer

"Thank you for looking after me last week. It's a superbly professional operation that you run and I'm always delighted to come."

Anton Bilton

"A genuinely premium service of value."

Simon Bentley

World Heart Day

[World Heart Day](#), created by the World Heart Federation is taking place on 26th September. It is the largest global awareness campaign on heart disease and stroke and this year, under the theme – "Work with Heart" – aims to educate employers, employees and their families that the majority of premature deaths from heart disease and stroke could be avoided if risk factors such as tobacco use, unhealthy diet and physical inactivity, are controlled. Workplace-wellness programmes that encourage healthy diets and physical activity, relieve stress, and restrict tobacco use have been shown to be a cost-effective way to improve the overall health of employees and reduce absenteeism, while enhancing, performance, productivity, retention and creativity.

The campaign encourages people to take responsibility for their own heart health and outlines [10 simple steps](#) that can be taken to help prevent heart attacks and strokes. Four of these steps are aimed in particular at encouraging a healthy working environment; 100% smoke-free workplace, exercising at work, healthy eating options in canteens and stress-free moments in the working day.

Many people spend over half of their waking hours in the workplace, making it the ideal place in which to promote healthy behaviours and raise awareness about the risk factors for heart disease and stroke. The campaign aims to encourage both employees and employers to commit to a heart-healthy workplace policy.



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