

**Excerpts from the Prime Minister's speech on the National Health Service**

7<sup>th</sup> January 2008

The Prime Minister delivered a speech where he unveiled a groundbreaking programme to screen people for conditions such as heart problems, stroke, diabetes and kidney disease.

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The NHS of the future will do more than just treat patients who are ill – it will be an NHS offering prevention as well.

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It will identify your clinical needs earlier than before, targeted to keeping you healthy and fit, and put you far more in control of your own health and your own life. And in the long run a preventive service personal to your needs is beneficial not just to individuals but to all of us as we reduce the cost of disease.

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Over time everyone in England will have access to the right preventative health check-up. The next stage is offering men over 65 a simple ultrasound test to detect early abdominal aortic aneurysm, or Triple A - the weakening of the main artery from heart to abdomen which kills over 3000 men a year ---- eventually saving more than 1600 lives each year. And in the next few months Alan Johnson will also set out plans to go even further - to introduce on the NHS a series of tests to identify vulnerability to heart and circulation problems. So there will soon be check-ups on offer to monitor for heart disease, strokes, diabetes and kidney disease - conditions which affect the lives of 6.2 million people, cause 200,000 deaths each year and account for a fifth of all hospital admissions.

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Second, we will do more to extend screening, for example for colon cancer and for breast cancer.