

ASCVD PREVENTION:

Shared Decision-Making Resource for Providers & Patients

In shared decision-making, healthcare providers and patients work together to make the best possible healthcare decisions. These decisions consider evidence about available options, the clinician's experience, and the patient's values and preferences. There is evidence that shared decision-making contributes to improvements in health. This resource is a guide for healthcare providers and patients to engage in shared decision-making about treatment for atherosclerotic cardiovascular disease (ASCVD) using the SHARED approach.

STEPS OF SHARED DECISION MAKING

SAMPLE TALKING POINTS

S

Seek Your Patient's Participation

What is ASCVD?

ASCVD is heart disease that causes heart attack and stroke. You have risk factors that put you at higher risk for having a heart attack or stroke in the future. Can I discuss options for lowering your risk?

Yes, what options will work best for me?

H

Help Your Patient Explore and Compare Treatment Options



Your lab results show that you have high cholesterol, which increases your risk for heart disease. Healthy lifestyle habits can lower your cholesterol. Based on your risk, you can also benefit from taking medicine to lower cholesterol.

A

Assess Your Patient's Values and Preferences

I'm not sure I have time to change my lifestyle.

I understand that finding time can be a challenge. We can think about different ways to make them part of your lifestyle. How do you feel about taking a daily medicine as well?

Are there side effects?

R

Reach A Decision with Your Patient



I'd like to prescribe a statin, a safe and effective drug used to lower cholesterol levels. Most people who take statins don't have side effects.

E

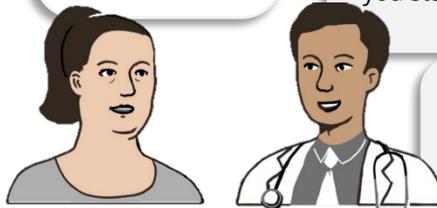
Evaluate Your Patient's Decision

Can I learn more about my options before deciding?

Let's discuss the different statins that are available and what may work best for you. After you start on treatment, we will check your blood work to see how well it is working.

D

Decide Which Resources Can Support The Patient



I'd also like to refer you to a dietitian to see if there are any changes to your diet that can help lower your cholesterol.

Find this resource online at <http://bit.do/shareddecisions>.



ASCVD Shared Decision-Making Guide



Step 1: Seek Your Patient's Participation

Many patients are unaware that they can and should participate in their health care decision-making. Communicate that a choice exists and invite your patient to participate in the process.

Summarize the health problem:

- "ASCVD refers to heart disease that causes heart attack or stroke."
- "One in 3 people will have a heart attack or stroke in their lifetime. If you have had a heart attack or stroke in the past, you are more likely to have it again."

Invite your patient to be involved in decisions. Invite your patient to ask questions and discuss options with you.

- "I'd like to discuss lifestyle changes and treatment to lower your risk for future heart attack or stroke. Then, we can decide together which options may be best for you."



Step 2: Help Your Patient Explore and Compare Treatment Options

Discussing options with your patient can help you build a trusting relationship.

Assess what your patient already knows about his or her options.

- "What have you heard about ways to lower the risk of heart disease or ASCVD?"

Explain each option clearly, using plain language. Avoid using technical or medical jargon. Point out when there are clear differences between specific options.

- "The best treatment depends on your risk for developing ASCVD in the future."
- "People at low risk for ASCVD can avoid or delay heart disease through lifestyle changes, such as eating a heart-healthy diet, exercising, and maintaining a healthy weight."
- "People at medium or high risk for ASCVD may benefit from taking medicine to lower their risk for ASCVD. Taking a statin daily is one of the most effective ways to lower the risk for a heart attack or stroke."

Additional talking points are provided in the accompanying patient handout, **"Reducing Your Risk for Heart Attack or Stroke" (page 5 of this document)**.

Discuss the benefits and harms of each option. Clearly communicate the risks and benefits of each option. Some resources include:

- Foundation for the National Lipid Association Primary Prevention of ASCVD: [https://www.learnyourlipids.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Statins for Prevention of Heart Attack and Stroke.pdf](https://www.learnyourlipids.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Statins_for_Prevention_of_Heart_Attack_and_Stroke.pdf)
- American College of Cardiology ASCVD Risk Estimator Plus: <https://tools.acc.org/ascvd-risk-estimator-plus>
- Mayo Clinic Statin Choice Decision Aid: <https://statindecisionaid.mayoclinic.org/statin/index>

ASCVD Shared Decision-Making Guide

A

Step 3: Assess Your Patient's Values and Preferences

Encourage your patient to talk about what is important to him or her regarding the options.

Use open-ended questions and listen actively to your patient.

- "What are the benefits of reducing the risk of ASCVD for you?" "What are the disadvantages?" "Do the benefits outweigh the disadvantages?"
- "What lifestyle and treatment goals are achievable for you?"
- "What will motivate you to stay on a treatment plan?"

Acknowledge the values and preferences that matter to your patient. Paraphrase what you have heard from your patient. This signals to your patient you are listening to his or her perspective.

R

Step 4: Reach a Decision With Your Patient

Ask if he or she is ready to make a decision or if they have any additional questions. Follow up with your patient if they request more time to consider the options.

- "Now that we discussed your options for reducing your risk of ASCVD, which lifestyle changes and treatment do you think is right for you?"

The decisions can be documented in the accompanying **"ASCVD Treatment Planning Worksheet" (page 4 of this document).**

E

Step 5: Evaluate Your Patient's Decision

Make plans to review the decision in the future. Remind your patient that decisions may be reviewed and some can be changed if they are not working well for your patient.

- "After starting treatment, we will check your blood work again to find out how well the treatment is working."
- "Side effects are uncommon, but if you do have any, we can try a different medicine or change the dose (amount) you are taking."

D

Decide Which Local Resources Will Effectively Support the Patient

Share resources to support patients, including their cardiovascular care team (e.g. lipid (cholesterol) specialist, pharmacist, registered dietitian). Give contact information for each resource.

References

- [The SHARE Approach](#). Content last reviewed October 2020. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, Rockville, MD.

ASCVD Treatment Planning Worksheet



What treatment goals are achievable for you?

Visit date: _____

Reason for treatment/Treatment goals		
<input type="checkbox"/> Lower risk of heart attack and stroke	<input type="checkbox"/> Family history of heart disease	
<input type="checkbox"/> Heart disease risk	<input type="checkbox"/> Lower cholesterol	
Heart-healthy diet goals	Exercise goals	
Medication regimen		
Name:	Dose (amount):	Frequency:
Name:	Dose (amount):	Frequency:
Name:	Dose (amount):	Frequency:
Treatment adherence concerns:	Treatment adherence strategies:	

Lab Results

Date	Lab Results					Medication Changes
	Total cholesterol	HDL-C	Non-HDL-C	LDL-C	TG	
	<i>Desirable values</i>					

HDL-C= high-density lipoprotein cholesterol; Non-HDL-C = non-high-density lipoprotein cholesterol; LDL-C= low-density lipoprotein cholesterol; TG = triglyceride

My Cardiovascular Care Team

Provider	Contact Info	Provider	Contact Info
Primary care provider		Registered dietitian	
Cholesterol specialist		Pharmacist	
Other specialist		Health insurance plan	

Reducing Your Risk for Heart Attack or Stroke



Knowing Your Risk of Heart Attack or Stroke

Stroke, heart attack and other heart diseases (known as ASCVD) are the leading cause of death in the U.S. The likelihood that a person will have a stroke or heart attack depends on several risk factors. For example, the older a person is, the more likely they are to have a stroke or heart attack. Age, gender, race, and family history of heart disease are risk factors for ASCVD.

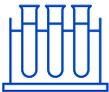
Risk of heart attack and stroke



Number of risk factors

Lowering Your Risk for Heart Attack or Stroke With Lifestyle Changes

Some risk factors for ASCVD – like age – cannot be changed. However, many risk factors can be changed. These include the following lifestyle changes:

- 
Managing blood pressure
- 
Controlling cholesterol
- 
Reducing blood sugar
- 
Being active
- 
Eating better
- 
Maintaining a healthy weight
- 
Stopping smoking

Lowering Your Risk for Heart Attack or Stroke With Medicine

Some people may also need to take a statin (type of medicine) daily to lower the risk of ASCVD. The recommendation for each person depends on their risk for ASCVD. A doctor can help you assess your risk for ASCVD.

Risk for ASCVD	Medical recommendations to reduce risk	
Low risk (less than 5%)	Lifestyle changes	Statin not recommended
Borderline (5 to 7.5%)		
Medium risk (7.5% to 20%)	Lifestyle changes	Statin recommended if one or more risk factor present
High risk (greater than 20%)		Statin recommended; other therapy may also be recommended

Heart Attack Prevention Begins Early

A heart attack can happen at any age. If you are over 40, or have several risk factors, work with your doctor to decide the best way to lower the risk of heart attack and stroke. Learn more at: learnyourlipids.com/lipid-lowering-medications/about-statin-medication.