

All men are invited for a screening test when they turn 65. The test involves a simple scan and takes about 10 minutes. Despite the availability of elective screening methods, AAA remains underdiagnosed, particularly among vulnerable populations.



It is still not known exactly what causes AAAs to develop. We know you are more at risk if you are a man over the age of 65 years or woman over the age of 70 years. There are some things you can do to reduce your risk these include: not smoking, maintain a healthy weight and lowering your cholesterol.



Your genetic make-up plays a role in having an AAA, as you have a much higher chance of developing a AAA if one of your relatives (parent, brother or sister) has or had one. If this is the case, you should ask your GP about getting an ultrasound scan.



There is a 1 in 17 lifetime risk of developing an AAA for the general population

Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA)

An aneurysm is defined as a localised swelling of an artery which is larger than 50% of its normal diameter.

For the aorta this is when it is >3cm. The aorta is the largest artery in the body. It connects your heart to the rest of your body. Many people with AAA don't know they have one. AAA can cause no noticeable symptoms at all, that is until it ruptures.



Approximately 4,000 Operations are performed for AAA each year

Despite advancements in medical technology, rupture of an aortic aneurysm still carries a staggering mortality rate of about 80%. There are 3,000 deaths due to AAAs each year in the UK



The only treatment available for AAA at the moment is major surgery. AAA can be repaired by traditional surgery through the belly or by 'endovascular surgery' using a stent.



The total elective surgical cost to the NHS due to AAA is in excess of £50 million, not including the screening programme costs (>£15 million per annum), costs due to emergency admissions or psychological costs incurred by such a diagnosis



The Circulation Foundation is a vascular charity working towards the following aims:

- To support vital research into vascular disease
- To support individuals living with vascular disease
- To raise the awareness of the impact vascular disease has on our patients, their carers, and the wider NHS

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SCAN ME

