Familial Hypercholesterolemia (FH)

A common genetic disorder that causes early heart disease
What is Familial Hypercholesterolemia?

Familial Hypercholesterolemia is a common genetic disorder which disrupts the body’s ability to clear cholesterol from the blood. This results in abnormally high levels of LDL-cholesterol (“bad cholesterol”) from birth. The excess cholesterol deposits in blood vessels, making them narrower (atherosclerosis).

FH causes early heart attacks and strokes.

F + H = FH
FAMILY HISTORY OF EARLY CARDIAC EVENTS + HIGH CHOLESTEROL

How do I know if I have FH?

Do you have:
• Family history of early heart disease and heart attacks?
• High LDL-cholesterol levels from an early age (above 190 mg/dL in adults and above 160 mg/dL in children)?

Some people may develop fatty deposits on the skin around the elbows and knees (xanthomas), and/or in the tendons (tendon xanthomas). Other possible symptoms are yellowish areas around the eyes (xanthelasmas) or a white arc near the colored part of the eye (corneal arcus).

Remember that not everyone with Familial Hypercholesterolemia has the same signs and symptoms.

FH Runs in Families

Familial Hypercholesterolemia is an inherited disorder. There are two main types:

• **Heterozygous FH (HeFH)** = this is the most common form of FH. If one parent passes on the FH gene, each of their children has a 50% chance of having FH.

• **Homozygous FH (HoFH)** = this is one of the rarest, yet most severe forms of FH. If both parents pass on the FH gene, each of their children has a 25% chance of having HoFH.
EARLY DIAGNOSIS, EARLY TREATMENT

Although Familial Hypercholesterolemia (FH) is a common disease, many individuals with FH show no visible symptoms and remain undiagnosed. FH is a life-threatening disorder if left untreated. Effective therapies are available. Through early detection and regular treatment, individuals with FH can live longer, healthier lives.

Early diagnosis and treatment are crucial for a healthier, longer life.

FH FACTS

• FH is not a rare disease. **1 in 200-500** people worldwide have FH.
• Up to **1.2 Million** people in the US have FH. **90%** of them have not been properly diagnosed or treated.
• Individuals with FH have a **20 times** higher risk of heart disease.
• FH is significantly more prevalent in certain populations such as: **Ashkenazi Jews, French Canadians, Lebanese, and South African Afrikaners.**
THE FH FOUNDATION IS HERE FOR YOU

The FH Foundation is a patient-centered nonprofit organization dedicated to education, advocacy, and research of all forms of Familial Hypercholesterolemia (FH). Our mission is to raise awareness and save lives by increasing the rate of early diagnosis and encouraging proactive treatment. If left untreated, FH leads to aggressive and early heart disease in women, men and children of all racial and ethnic backgrounds.

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