

Screening for Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm

An abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA) is diagnosed when the aorta, the main blood vessel in the body, bulges to more than 3 cm in diameter in the abdomen. Common risk factors for AAA include male sex, smoking, high blood pressure, age, high cholesterol, and family history of AAA or other heart diseases. AAA occurs in 9% to 22% of men and 2% to 6.2% of women above 65 years old. It is important to get screened to prevent risk of rupture as death may occur if not treated. Often AAA has no symptoms before rupture. Treatment for AAA is recommended when diameter is greater than 5.5 cm in men and 5.0 cm in women. Typical treatment is through surgical repair.

In screening for AAA in adults without symptoms, with or without a family history of AAA or with or without a history of smoking, ultrasound (US) (<http://www.radiologyinfo.org/abdominus>) aorta abdomen is usually appropriate. US duplex Doppler aorta abdomen may be appropriate.

For more information, see the *Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm* page (<http://www.radiologyinfo.org/abdoaneurysm>).

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