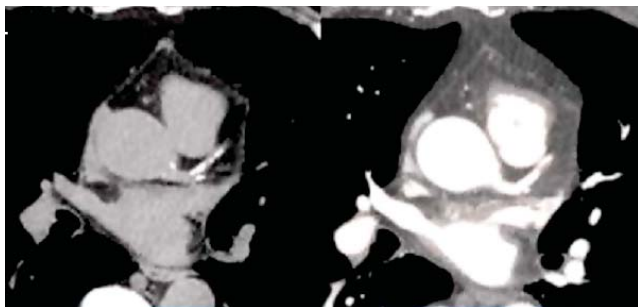


Bright Ideas

News from Knox City Council Bright Ideas Network

February 2020, Edition 45



A lucky find

The following article was submitted by Bright Ideas Network reader, David Mallen. He and his wife, Glenys, run the monthly Heart Foundation Walking Group, Knox SOW. At the beginning of last year, David came across 'The Widowmaker Movie' on YouTube [click here](#) to view the film.

The movie made an impact on David and despite having absolutely no symptoms of heart disease, he decided to ask his doctor to organise a Calcium Score Xray that was recommended in the Widowmaker Movie. It was just as well he did because David's score was "off the scale" at 1474!! (The average score for a 70 year old male is 400). His Cardiologist described David as "a heart attack waiting to happen". David had a stent inserted a few weeks later and is now in good health.

When David mentioned his heart surgery to the members of his walking group, they were all surprised because he is "such a fit man". David would now like to share with as many people as possible, his lucky discovery of the Coronary Calcium Score.



Calcium Score	
Score	Category
0	No Atherosclerosis
1 – 100	Mild Disease
101 – 400	Moderate Disease
> 400	Severe Disease

What is your Coronary Calcium Score?

by David Mallen

A simple test can discover your heart health. Is your doctor still relying on family history, blood tests, blood pressure measurements and ECGs to assess your risk factors and estimate your heart health? There is a non-invasive test that finds out exactly how much calcium and plaque you have in and around your heart. It is a Coronary Calcium Score CT Xray and can be organised by your doctor. "It's the best predictive test for heart disease risk." You lie in a CT scanner for 10 minutes and hold your breath for a few seconds when told to. It costs about \$175 and Pensioners and Health Care Card holders get a 50% discount. There is no Medicare rebate.

Your test result is a number that is your 'Calcium Score'. It is a measure of the area and intensity of white calcium in the xray image. The score can range from 0 to more than 400. The higher your score, the greater your chance of having a heart attack. The build-up of plaque is called Atherosclerosis Disease. You may not have any symptoms!

If your score is above 100 you will be referred to a Cardiologist. They can organise a further test to check for narrowing of your coronary arteries. This is a Coronary Angiogram CT Xray. It is similar to the first test but this time you are injected with dye that shows an image of your heart and arteries and reveals if there is any narrowing of the blood vessels.

This test is recommended for men over 45 and women over 55. More details are available on the Knox Private Hospital and Monash Heart websites: knoxprivatehospital.com.au or monashheart.org.au.

On average 50 people (30 male & 20 female) die from heart disease every day. That is one person every 30 minutes. It is the leading cause of death in Australia.

More Information:

Irish Heart Disease Awareness – ihda.ie/videos

What is a Calcium Score? – ditchthecarbs.com/what-is-a-calcium-score

Heart Healthy Meal Plan – knoxow.org.au/HealthyFood.html

Calcium Score Scan – knoxow.org.au/CalciumScore.html

