



Frequently Asked Questions Health Risk Assessment Program

What is a health risk assessment (HRA)?

It's a health screen, performed at your work site, during working hours and a report that provides you with the results of the health screen including information about your health risks.

Why is my employer offering the program at the work site at no cost to me?

It's in your employer's best interest to keep you healthy. Many people don't visit their physician for an annual physical. This program brings many of the features of an annual physical to the employee at work. When you are aware of your health risks (high blood pressure, high cholesterol, high glucose, etc.), you are in a better position to prevent future problems and/or get treatment for existing problems early on.

Why should I participate?

- It's free to you - your employer pays for it. If you were to have the same services done in a physician's office, it could cost more than \$200.
- It's convenient.
- It's confidential. No personal test results go to your employer without your written consent.
- Knowledge. You will learn how well you are doing on a variety of factors that can affect your health.
- Becoming aware of your health risks enables you to treat health problems at an early stage. Diabetes, for example, can lead to the future loss of limbs if the disease isn't treated early on.
- Annual comparisons. Individual reports show data for all the years you participated in the HRA. You will be able to compare your current results with past years.

What is involved?

1. You complete a questionnaire and lab consent form in advance and bring the forms with you to your scheduled work site health screen.
2. You participate in a work site health screen - an examiner takes physical measurements for blood pressure, height, weight, wrist, and waist and hip size. The examiner will take a blood sample from a vein in your arm. The blood sample is tested by a lab for:
 - Total cholesterol, HDL and LDL - fats found in the blood.
 - Triglycerides – fatty substances found in the blood.
 - Glucose - sugar found in the blood.
 - Nicotine - present in the blood of tobacco users or those routinely exposed to second-hand smoke.
 - Various liver function tests - the liver filters harmful substances from the blood (such as alcohol).
 - Prostate-specific antigen (PSA) – a protein produced by cells of the prostate gland. Elevated levels can indicate inflammation or disease. This test is optional

and for males only at or above a specified age. Your employer will determine if this test will be offered and set age parameters.

3. Your completed questionnaires and blood sample results are sent to Healics. The data is entered into the Healics computer system. Individual reports are printed and mailed to your home in a sealed envelope or delivered to you personally by a health risk consultant.
4. Healics provides your employer with an aggregate group report (the employer does not receive your individual HRA report) that indicates your company's overall health risks (such as high cholesterol) and employee interests. This enables your employer to offer programs that work to improve the health of the entire company.

How do I prepare for the health screen?

- Follow the HRA participant instructions and bring the completed questionnaire and laboratory consent form with you to your health screen appointment.
- Fast for 8-12 hours - no food or drink other than water.
- Drink plenty of water before your screening so your body isn't dehydrated.
- Don't exercise vigorously before your screening. Sweating will reduce the water content in your blood and can make the blood draw more difficult.
- Continue to take any medications that your doctor has prescribed, especially insulin. Let the examiner know about those medications.
- Don't drink alcohol for at least 24 hours. Alcohol dehydrates the blood and can make the blood draw more difficult.
- Avoid caffeine and smoking for at least 30 minutes prior to your screening.
- Wear shoes that are easy to remove.
- Wear a shirt that is short-sleeved, sleeveless or easy to roll up over the elbow.
- Avoid wearing pleats or anything that bunches at the waist or hips.

What if I am on prescription medication?

Continue taking your prescription medications so that your test results reflect this medical treatment. Most medications do not affect test results. It is especially important that you continue to take insulin if you are on that medication.

What if I experience difficulty giving a blood sample?

If you know you'll have difficulty, let the examiner know prior to your blood draw. In the rare occurrence the initial blood draw is unsuccessful, the examiner will attempt to draw blood a second time. No more than two attempts will be made. If a blood sample can't be collected, call Healics at 1-800-HEALICS (1-800-432-5427) to discuss alternative options.

What if my blood pressure is abnormally high at the time of the test?

High blood pressure can indicate a medical condition or it could be the result of stress (due to various reasons). Either way, you should discuss your results with your physician as soon as possible.

What was the method used to calculate my body frame size and body fat percentage as reported on my health risk report?

The method used for calculating your body frame size and body fat percentage is called the "Penrose Nelson Fisher Method". This method was developed and studied in the 1970's and 1980's and eventually published after it was proven accurate in 1985. No expensive equipment is needed to obtain a result and it's easy to monitor your progress from year to

year. The formula for this method can be found in the "Interpreting Your Health Risk Report" booklet that you received with your Health Risk Report. All examiners who perform the health screenings are familiar with this method and are highly qualified and experienced.

The following measurements are used in the calculation to determine your body frame size and body fat percentage using this method:

1. Your height - measured to the nearest inch with your shoes removed.
2. Your weight - measured with clothes on and shoes removed.
3. The circumference of your wrist between your knobby wrist bone and your hand. This measurement is typically a constant in humans and is one factor in determining your individual frame size.
4. *For men:* the circumference of your waist at your umbilical (belly button). *For women:* the circumference of your waist at your umbilical and at the widest point of your hips. This measurement is taken because of the way the human anatomy stores excess lipids (fat). This measurement is not to be confused with your pant waist size (in either men or women- you typically do not wear the waistband of your pants at the height of your belly button).

For more information on this method of measurement and its accuracy, read:

- "How to Lower Your Fat Thermostat, The No Diet Reprogramming Plan for Lifelong Weight Control." The book is no longer in print, but you can order a used copy on www.amazon.com or at your local bookstore.
- "Penrose, K., Nelson, A., and Fisher, A. (1985), "Generalized Body Composition Prediction Equation for Men Using Simple Measurement Techniques" (abstract), *Medicine and Science in Sports and Exercise*, 17(2), 189".

What if I have additional questions?

You can ask a member of the exam team at the time of the health screen or call Healics at 1-800-HEALICS (1-800-432-5437).

Who will be notified of my results?

Only you, unless you have authorized in writing the release of your results to anyone else.

How do I know I can trust Healics to keep my information confidential?

Healics has 20+ years of demonstrated reliability. HIPAA (Health Insurance Protection and Portability Act), a government enacted set of laws, mandates that personal health information be kept confidential unless you give written permission for this information to be shared. As required by HIPAA, Healics is in compliance with these laws.

What will the results tell me?

Eleven measurable health risk factors are graded on a 100-point scale and your results fall into a specific color-coded range from cool blue (good) to red-alert (bad). You'll learn about your:

- Blood nicotine - if you use tobacco or are routinely around others that use tobacco, there will be nicotine in your blood.
- Measured weight compared to ideal weight - knowing your ideal weight will give you a goal to work towards.
- Body fat – it's important to know how much of your body mass is fat vs. lean weight in addition to knowing your weight.
- Blood pressure – the force of your blood pushing against the walls of your arteries. The first number (systolic) is the pressure of blood against artery walls when the heart beats, pumping the blood. The second number (diastolic) is the pressure of blood against artery walls when the heart is at rest and refills with blood.

- Total Cholesterol - the total of both the good and bad fats in the blood stream.
- LDL Cholesterol - LDL stands for low-density lipoproteins, a type of fat. LDL is the “bad” cholesterol. High amounts of this low-density fat can stick to blood vessel walls and clog up your arteries.
- HDL Cholesterol - HDL stands for high-density lipoproteins. HDL is the “good” cholesterol and removes the “bad” cholesterol from your body.
- Cholesterol/HDL Ratio - this ratio indicates what percent of the total cholesterol is made up of the good cholesterol.
- Triglycerides – a type of fat in the bloodstream and fat tissue. When you consume more calories than you need, the extra calories are converted to triglycerides and stored in fat cells. Later, when your body requires energy, certain hormones trigger the release of triglycerides to meet the demand. You could be at risk for heart disease if your triglyceride level is above normal.
- Glucose - blood sugar. Glucose is food for your cells, but too much glucose in your blood stream is not good for you.
- GGT – stands for gamma glutamyl transferase. GGT is a protein in your bloodstream that helps detect internal disease and liver pollution.

Your overall point total will identify your risk category as one of the following: minimum (blue), moderate (green), medium (yellow), high (orange), or extreme (red). “Interpreting Your Health Risk Report” - a guidebook for understanding your results and improving your health will accompany your report. It explains each measurable health risk and offer ways to improve your lifestyle and reduce those health risks. An annual comparison page is provided so that you can track your progress from year to year.

How did Healics come up with the 100-point health scoring system?

Eleven measured risk factors are weighted based on their impact on overall medical claims for the same year. Healics compared claims with costs for 30,000 insured to calculate the numbers.

How can I measure progress?

Screenings are held annually, so you will be able to compare your results from year-to-year. One of the unique features of the Health Risk Report is the comparison page, which shows results from all years of participation.

What if I have a score(s) that falls into a high-risk category?

This is an indication that you will need to make some changes in your life to avoid potentially severe medical problems in your future. You should discuss your results, especially those in the high-risk areas, with your physician.

What if I receive a medical alert for blood pressure or a blood test?

Medical alerts are starred (*) on your report. If you received a star on your report it indicates that you have a lab value well outside the normal range and you should discuss your results with your physician as soon as possible.

What if I have a medical condition that may affect my results?

If you have a medical condition that causes an elevated test result, you should discuss your results with your physician as soon as possible.

Who provides the health risk assessment program?

Healics, Inc. has been in business for 20+ years and is the largest independent provider of HRA's in the state of Wisconsin. For more information, visit our web site at www.healics.com.

The examiners that come to the worksite are experienced professionals. They are qualified to do the tests that are involved. Blood samples are sent to Clinical Reference Laboratory (CRL) for testing. CRL is a licensed clinical lab that provides state-of-the-art testing in forensic toxicology and health risk assessments. CRL sends your blood test results to Healics for HRA report preparation.

How is a health screen different from a health examination?

A physician performs a health examination. A Healics examiner does a health screen at the work site. While many of the tests included in a health screen are the same as those done by your physician, a health exam includes more evaluations than are done during a health screen. For example, your physician will examine your eyes, ears and mouth at an examination. This will not be done during a health screen.

Why doesn't a physician do the health screening?

The test procedures in the HRA do not require a physician and the cost for a physician to do the health screening would be too high. If your results reveal a condition that should be treated by a physician it will be indicated on your HRA report.

What if I am unhappy with a health screen examiner?

Notify your employer's wellness coordinator immediately with any problems. Your coordinator will contact Healics so we can address the problem.

What else is in it for me?

Past experience shows that this type of health awareness program motivates people to "get healthy" resulting in less sickness and potentially reducing health care expenses. Health plan premiums are based on medical care costs. Employees contribute towards their health plan premiums. If everyone at the company works towards being healthier, the group's total costs can be reduced and you, the employee, could possibly see a reduction in monthly contributions to the health plan.