

Frequently Asked Questions

Is the First Responder Cardiology Research Education and Early Detection Program (FR CREED) mandatory?

No. Your participation is completely voluntary.

Do I have to participate in SportCardiologyBC's research to be eligible for the screening program?

No; however, SportsCardiologyBC's primary goal is to help firefighters obtain valuable information regarding detection and prevention of cardiovascular disease. Your participation and support are invaluable not only to their research objectives, but also to the entire firefighting community. Currently, the Canadian data regarding firefighters' cardiovascular health is very limited.

Will my personal information and test results be shared with anyone without my permission?

No. You are encouraged to share your results with your primary care physician. SportsCardiologyBC will not share your results with any third party without your prior written consent unless required by law (ex. risk of harming yourself or others, court order, etc.). If you would like SportsCardiologyBC to share your results with a third party you will need to give us written permission prior to the release of your medical records. This is in accordance with both provincial and federal privacy and confidentiality laws.

Who do I contact if I have questions about the privacy of the program?

Please contact Maida Valkenier, Executive Director at SportsCardiologyBC. You can reach her by email at maida.valkenier@vch.ca. You can also contact her by phone at 604-318-7991.

Does the program replace my family doctor?

No. It is strongly recommended that you work with your family doctor on all current and future concerns. This program is designed for screening and early detection purposes only. If you do not have a family doctor, the SCBC team will assist you in receiving the evaluation and treatment you need.

What will I receive from the program?

You will receive a personalized cardiac health report which contains all the results of the performed tests as well as the recommendations from the SportsCardiologyBC medical team.

When do I receive my results?

You will receive the results at the end of the screening. Our medical consultant will explain your results to you during the medical consultation. The results of the ECG and exercise stress test will be reviewed 7-10 business days after the screening by a cardiologist at SportsCardiologyBC. This may be done sooner depending on the urgency of your result. Should additional consultation or testing be required, you will be contacted by a member of the SportsCardiologyBC team.

Will I have a consultation with a SportsCardiologyBC team member after completing my blood work and exercise stress test?

Yes. Consultations will be available in person, on the phone, or via video once all tests have been completed for the day.

Which doctor is overseeing the entire program?

Dr. Saul Isserow (Cardiologist). Dr. Isserow is the Medical Director of SportsCardiologyBC, Director of Cardiology at the UBC Hospital and Director of Centre for Cardiovascular Health at VGH.

How will my blood sample be collected?

Your blood sample will be collected by pricking the finger and collecting a small amount of blood to be tested. We will not conduct a full venous draw.

What is an electrocardiogram (ECG)?

An electrocardiogram (ECG) records the electrical activity of your heart. It provides information about your heart rate and rhythm. This will take approximately 5 minutes to complete.

What is a cardiac exercise stress test?

A cardiac stress test is a test that measures the heart's ability to respond to external stress in a controlled environment. Exercise stress tests may help cardiologists identify abnormal heart rhythms (arrhythmias) and may help to detect the presence or absence of coronary artery disease. This test involves exercising on a stationary bike while monitoring the electrical activity of your heart. The resistance of the bike will increase throughout the test. The results show how well your heart responds to the stress of exercising at different intensities. This will take approximately 30 minutes to complete.

What is a Framingham Risk Score?

The Framingham Risk Score is a gender-specific algorithm used to estimate the 10-year cardiovascular risk of an individual.

Are these tests 100% accurate in detecting heart disease?

No. Screening is not 100% accurate in detecting disease and/or predicting future cardiac events. The screening program will serve as a guide to determine if you require additional testing that can help in a more accurate diagnosis.

Will I be tested again next year?

Yes. You will be able to participate in the program next year which will allow you to compare your results and make necessary changes. The funding is approved for 2 years.

Who do I contact for additional information regarding the program?

You can contact SCBC's Research and Project Coordinator Ahmed Khan at:
ahmed.khan@vch.ca or 416 873 0674.