

Dear Sir or Madam,

December 2024

We would like to inform you about the changes in our team and the current changed goals in the field of health: 1. regarding blood pressure and 2. regarding smears.

The standards for good blood pressure have become stricter. Good blood pressure is important to stay healthy and fit for a long time. High blood pressure damages the blood circulation, for example in the heart, brain, kidneys, legs, eyes, etc. These organs "age faster" if they have to work under high pressure for a long time.



Blood pressure fluctuates in each of us. It can be different from hour to hour. Often, blood pressure is temporarily higher at a time of greater emotion or when time is of the essence, for example during a visit to the doctor. If blood pressure is higher during a visit to the doctor, we would like to know whether it is also high for a long time, also at home. It is important for you and for us that we have an idea of your average blood pressure, based on several measurements (if it was measured as high once). Repeated measurements can be done by yourself when you borrow or buy a device, or by the nursing staff, etc. We would like to read a list of repeated measurements (with day and time).

For most people, it is important that the blood pressure is on average below 13 (also called 130). This is much stricter than before. But it is important that you respect this standard: it allows you to live longer and be fitter for longer!

In some people, the blood circulation is simultaneously damaged by high cholesterol, lack of exercise, being overweight, smoking and diabetes. These are the risk factors for poor blood circulation. Try to make everything you can influence as best as possible in this area! This prolongs your life and also gives you more years of fitness in this life... Have a regular preventive conversation about this with our nursing staff! You can regularly request an appointment for this!

There are also changes in women's smear tests (scientific and legal). The need (and reimbursement of laboratory costs) is now only a repetition every five years (every three years before the age of 30, only once after the age of 64). This can be done by both the general practitioner and the gynecologist. In this cases, the laboratory will perform a different test depending on age:

- between 25 and 30 years: 1a. A test for bad cells (cytology)
- between 30 and 64 years: 1b. A test for viruses that can cause cancer there (HPV).

If this test result is not good, the other test is also performed on the same sample. This order is fixed, as is its reimbursement. The patient and the doctor cannot make a choice about this. These two tests on 1 sample can only be performed on samples taken by doctors. If a woman considers it absolutely impossible to be examined by a doctor, she can propose a self-sampling of the 1b test (the material, the Evalynn Brush, can be requested from the doctor). This costs more. Self-sampling is not scientifically recommended because if the result is bad, a new sample (taken by a doctor) is necessary for the additional test (= double cost and possible loss of time).

For women aged 65 and over: if no screening has been carried out in the last 10 years, only one double test (cytology and HPV test) is recommended. Otherwise, it is no longer necessary and this prevention is not useful.

In case of gynecological complaints and after bad test results, other (and more frequent) examinations should be done by a GP or gynecologist.

On [www.mediKwatrecht.be](http://www.mediKwatrecht.be) you will find other advice for the follow-up of diseases and about vaccines.

On 1/1/25, we are hiring a new nurse: Mrs. Marlies De Saveur. She will replace Mr. Geoffrey Poelman, who is taking a new turn in his career with a business partner. We thank Geoffrey for his efforts and know that many of you were satisfied with his style and commitment. Marlies, chosen from 20 applications, will certainly also become an expert and pleasant member of the team.

We wish you a happy new year 2025 and are always available for all your questions.

*Drs. Deprost, Venneman, Rahoens, De Keyzer*

*Nurses Jolien, Geoffrey, Marlies*