

Information sheet for participants
Health examination

Dear valued participant to the Health 2000-survey

You have been selected at random from the national population register to participate in the national Health 2000 survey. The study is intended to provide an up-to-date and complete picture of Finnish adults' health and functional capacity. At the same time information will be gathered about health determinants and health differences between population groups. Health 2000 is extremely important for medical and health services research. The data gathered will be used for the planning of health care and social security, the assessment of the frequency of diseases, their care and causes as well as for the estimation of heritability of common diseases. It is highly desirable that all invited people can participate.

More than 100 distinguished experts from all fields of medicine and health care have participated in planning the study. The survey is jointly being carried out by the Central Pensions Institute, Social Insurance Institution, National Public Health institute, National Research and Development Centre for welfare and health, Statistics Finland and the Institute for Occupational Health. Co-ordination is taken care of by the National Public Health Institute and the Director of the Study is Research Professor Arpo Aromaa. The field survey proper will be carried out between September 2000 and spring 2001.

The study began with a home interview carried out by interviewers of Statistics Finland. After that you have been invited to a health examination carried out by a qualified research team. Typically the examination lasts about 4 hours. In addition, the study comprises questionnaires to be filled in during the examination or at home.

During the examination we will measure your height, weight, blood pressure and your abdominal, hip and neck circumferences. In addition, an ECG will be recorded and blood samples will be drawn. The blood samples will be used for determinations, amongst others, of blood fats, glucose and gammaGT (a liver test). The samples will be stored and later other determinations, including genetic determinations, can be carried out. We will also assess your bone density by a heel ultrasound measurement. Other determinations concern respiratory function, the assessment of body fat and vision and hearing.

The examination also contains a dentist's examination, an x-ray determination of the mouth and teeth and a series of tests of performance and functioning. Next, a doctor examines you. The last part is a mental health interview. These examinations are unusually comprehensive and therefore it is worth while to participate even if you are receiving good care.

All examinations are safe and the personnel is qualified. There is a doctor constantly present during the examination. The X-ray of the teeth (orthopantomogram) is a method in daily use in dental care and the associated radiation exposure is extremely small. The radiation safety authority has approved use of our modern digital imaging equipment.

You will be informed about the findings both during the examination and afterwards by letter when the laboratory determinations are available. In addition to the information provided by you we will later obtain data from registers of the Central Pension's institute, the Social insurance institution and the National Research and development Centre for Welfare and Health. These data will concern your illnesses, medicines and use of services as well as living conditions.

All research data are confidential, they will only be used in medical research and remain in the sole use of participating researchers. In addition to researchers of the National Public Health Institute the data will be analysed in other participating research institutes, notably the Social Insurance Institution, the National Research and Development Centre for Welfare and Health, Statistics Finland, The Institute of Occupational Health, The UKK-Institute for Health Promotion, and some Universities. All persons handling the data are bound to professional secrecy, and confidentiality is also ensured by handling the data mainly without your personal identification. Furthermore, we will store and archive all research materials (forms and questionnaires, samples and electronic data) with extreme care so that unauthorized persons do not have access to them.

Participation is voluntary. You can interrupt your study at whatever point.

The employers' organizations recommend that all employers make it possible for their employees to participate in the study.

Should you have any queries about the Health 2000-survey in general or your own examination, all personnel will be glad to provide further information.

Welcome to participate to the Health 2000-study!