

## TASMANIA

# New cholesterol health report reveals Tasmanians are not doing enough for their hearts

**New data reveals Tasmanians are not doing enough to get their cholesterol levels in check, with a cardiologist warning people about the increased risk of a heart attack or stroke. Find out what foods you should avoid >>**

ANNIE MCCANN, Mercury

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BARRY McClure says preventive measures have been a godsend in protecting him against heart attacks, as new data reveals Tasmanians are not doing enough for their hearts.

Mr McClure said measuring an irregular heartbeat of just 30 beats per minute at a regular doctor's appointment revealed his cardiovascular disease.

"My right artery was 95 per cent blocked," he said.

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Mr McClure said he felt lucky to receive a stent before a heart attack occurred, insisting ongoing preventive medication, dietary regulation and regular rehabilitation tests were crucial for his health.

But cardiologist Dr Warrick Bishop said many people who had suffered heart attacks were not doing enough to prevent a second event.

"People can feel quite well after they've had their stent or bypass," he said.

"If they feel well then the impetus to take tablets or stay healthy isn't as clear."

The first cholesterol report in over a decade has revealed Tasmanians have the second highest LDL or "bad cholesterol" levels in the country, averaging above the suggested 1.8 mmol/L at 1.93 mmol/L.

The Baker Heart and Diabetes Institute report suggested Australia's number of above average cholesterol consumers had not improved in a decade, with loss of productivity from cholesterol estimated at \$1.55 billion in 2017.

Dr Bishop said optimal management of cholesterol could see nearly 4000 lives and \$66.6 million in healthcare costs saved.

"There's overwhelming data that tells us conclusively lowering cholesterol for high risk people reduces future events," he said.

Foods high in unhealthy cholesterol include fatty meats, full fat dairy and takeaway and processed foods.