

## Do You Have a Type A Personality?

By Amy Scholten, MPH

A number of factors can increase a person's risk for coronary heart disease. One risk factor is Type A behavior, which is characterized by chronic impatience, anger and a hurried lifestyle. The following assessment can help you determine if you have Type A personality traits. Read each question carefully and choose the answer that describes how you *typically* tend to react. Please keep in mind that this is a *general* assessment, not a diagnostic tool. Please see a mental health care provider for more in-depth testing.

**1. Which statement is most true for you?**

- a) I tend to pace myself and take things slowly.
- b) I tend to be in a hurry or feel rushed most of the time.

**2. Which best describes your listening skills?**

- a) I tend to listen patiently to what people have to say, even if they're having difficulty expressing themselves.
- b) I tend to find it difficult to listen fully to people and often become impatient. I'm usually thinking of other things to say at the same time.

**3. What is your attitude when playing a game?**

- a) I'm usually focused on having fun, not winning.
- b) I play to win.

**4. What are your basic beliefs about people?**

- a) I tend to believe that people are basically good.
- b) I tend to believe that people are basically untrustworthy and selfish.

**5. How do you approach tasks?**

- a) I tend to focus on one task at a time.
- b) I tend to tackle many things at once.

**6. When something is bothering you, how are you most likely to cope?**

- a) I usually talk it over with a trusted family member, friend or colleague.
- b) I keep it to myself. I don't like talking about my feelings or problems.

**7. How would you characterize your typical eating behavior?**

- a) I eat at a leisurely pace.
- b) I eat fast because I have so much to do, or I eat while I'm working or doing something else.

**8. How would you describe the balance between your work and your relationships?**

- a) My work and relationships are equally important.
- b) I'm very focused on personal achievement and sometimes put my work ahead of my relationships.

**9. How are you most likely to judge people?**

- a) I judge them by their character and personal qualities.
- b) I judge them according to how useful they are to me.

**10. What would others be most likely to say to you?**

- a) Hurry up. Don't waste time.
- b) Slow down and relax.

**11. How often do you feel annoyed by slow service, bad drivers or rude clerks?**

- a) Rarely or sometimes
- b) Frequently

**12. Which statement is most true for you?**

- a) I tend to be fairly calm and don't get angry that often.
- b) I tend to get angry rather easily.

**13. When you have to wait in lines or sit in traffic, how do you usually feel?**

- a) I try to accept it and relax. There's not much I can do about it.
- b) I feel angry and impatient. I hate wasting time.

**14. How do you tend to view your relationship with coworkers?**

- a) As cooperative, win/win – I want to help them succeed
- b) As competitive, win/lose – I want to outdo them, be better than them

**15. Do you find it easy to relax?**

- a) Yes, most of the time

b) Rarely

## Scoring

Number of a and b Answers	Point Value for Answers	Total Point Value (multiply total number of a and answers by their corresponding point value)
Number of a answers:	All a answers = <b>1 point</b>	
Number of b answers:	All b answers = <b>10 points</b>	
		Score (add total of a and b points):

Your Score	Interpretation
<b>15-42</b>	Your score suggests that you have very few Type A behaviors. Keep up the good work!
<b>51-78</b>	Your score suggests that you have some Type A behaviors but are probably not a Type A personality. You could benefit from making a few lifestyle changes or using some relaxation techniques.
<b>87-150</b>	Your score suggests that you have a Type A personality. This puts you at risk for heart disease, high blood pressure and other problems. Strongly consider lifestyle changes, counseling, and using relaxation techniques to reduce your stress and increase your sense of well-being.

### Source:

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### Biography

Amy Scholten, MPH, has a Master of Public Health in health promotion and education from the University of South Carolina and a Bachelor of Science in food and nutrition from Framingham State College. She is a freelance health writer and has taught stress management at Ithaca College in Ithaca, NY, USA.