

3.4.3 Personal History

I. PURPOSE

The Personal History questionnaire is used to collect information on socio-economic status (SES) and smoking and drinking habits, all of which are related to an individual's risk of cardiovascular disease.

II. METHODS

General instructions:

This is a **self-administered questionnaire**. Provide the participant with the form and a pencil and give brief instructions for completion. If the participant is unable to self-administer the questionnaire, then a MESA staff member will administer the questionnaire.

Ask the participant to try to answer all questions, unless instructed to skip the question. Remind him/her to request assistance from a staff member if anything is unclear. Most participants should be able to complete the questionnaire on their own. However, if the participant expresses or appears to have difficulty reading or comprehending the questions, offer to help and make arrangements for an interviewer administered version in the appropriate language.

Specific instructions:

- Instruct the participant to read the questions and their instructions carefully then fill out all questions, except those he/she is instructed to skip as a result of his/her response to a specific question.
- If he/she is unsure about an exact answer (e.g., for “average number of drinks per week”), tell him/her to give a best estimate.
- In questions where the participant is asked about number of times used, instruct him/her to fill in “00,” if use is less than one.

Participant Information (questions 1–3)

The participant will begin the questionnaire with the introduction below:

This form is intended to collect information about your background and lifestyle which may impact your risk of cardiovascular disease. Please complete all items except those which you are specifically instructed to skip. If you are unsure about the answer to a specific question, please estimate the answer to the best of your ability. If you have a question about a particular item, please write a small ‘x’ in the margin of the form, making sure not to write it near any of the response bubbles, and then ask a staff member for clarification of those items after you have completed the rest of the form.

- 1a. *Has your employment status changed since your MESA clinic visit on [Exam 2 visit date]? Choose Yes or No.*

If no, skip to question #2.

If yes, continue with 1b.

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- 1b. **Choose one of the following that best describes your current occupation.** Select a choice and fill in the appropriate bubble.
If homemaker, not working outside the home: Did you previously work outside the home? Choose Yes or No.
2. **Where do you usually go for medical care?**
Participant should select (or write in) the place he/she goes most often for medical care. Participant should mark “other” only if the response clearly does not fit one of the given responses. For example, an urgent care clinic would be included in the “doctor’s office or clinic” category.
3. **To help pay for your medical care, do you now have:**
Participant should select (or write in) all applicable items.

Alcohol usage and smoking (questions 4–15)

All participants should answer questions 4, 9, 13, 14, and 15. People who drink should complete questions 5–8; former and current smokers should complete question 10 and 11; and current non-smokers should complete question 12. If the participant feels uncomfortable with these questions, please reassure him/her that all collected information is strictly confidential. This section begins with the following introductory script:

The following questions are about smoking and alcohol use... They will help us better understand the role of smoking and alcohol use in the risk of cardiovascular disease.

4. **Do you presently drink alcoholic beverages?**
Choices are “yes” or “no”. **If no, skip to question 9.**
5. **How many glasses of red wine do you usually have per week?**
(1 serving = 3.5 oz glass, 1 bottle = 750ml = 8 glasses)
Provide the average number of drinks per week. Record “00” if less than one glass of red wine per week.
6. **How many glasses of white wine do you usually have per week?**
(1 serving = 3.5 oz glass, 1 bottle = 750ml = 8 glasses)
Provide the average number of drinks per week. Record “00” if less than one glass of white wine per week.
7. **How many cans, bottles, or glasses of beer do you usually have per week?**
(1 serving = 12 oz glass, 1 bottle = 355ml = 1 glass)
Provide the average number of 12-ounce drinks per week. Record “00” if less than one serving of beer per week.
8. **How many drinks of liquor or mixed drinks do you usually have per week?**
(1 serving of liquor = 1.5-ounce shot-glass, or one mixed drink)
Provide the average number of drinks per week. Record “00” if less than one drink of liquor per week.

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9. ***Which of the following best describes your current smoking status?***
Choose the appropriate response and fill in the bubble.
If never smoked, skip to question 12 and continue with the questionnaire.
10. ***Have you smoked cigarettes during the last 30 days?***
Choose “yes” or “no” and fill in the bubble.
If no, skip to question 12. If yes, continue with question 11
11. ***On average, about how many cigarettes a day do you smoke?***
Provide the number of cigarettes smoked per day and then skip to question 13.
The participant should record 00 if the average number of cigarettes per day is less than one. Make sure participants record the number of *cigarettes* per day. If a participant answers in number of packs per day, recalculate into number of cigarettes per day (1 pack = 20 cigarettes).
12. ***Current non-smokers only: During the past year about how many hours per week were you in close contact with people when they were smoking? (e.g., in your home, in a car, at work, other close quarters, etc.)***
Provide number of hours per week.
This question applies *only to current non-smokers and former users of any kind of tobacco product*. The goal of the question is to obtain information on passive exposure to *cigarette* smoke (excluding cigars, pipes, etc.) in any type of close quarters during the past 12 months. Record the number of hours in a *typical* week; do not include isolated or atypical situations, such as holiday gatherings or short-term house guests who smoke. If participants do not remember the exact amount of time, ask them to give their best estimate. Record 00 if participant was exposed to less than 1 hour of cigarette smoke per week.
13. ***In your childhood, did you live with a regular cigarette smoker who smoked in your home?***
Choices are “yes,” “no,” or “don’t know.” **If yes, record the number of smokers who lived in the home.**
14. ***As an adult, have you ever lived with a regular cigarette smoker (not including yourself) who smoked in your home?***
Choices are “yes,” “no,” or “don’t know.” **If yes, record the total number of years you lived with them when they were smoking.**
15. ***As an adult, have you ever spent time on a regular basis, when you were not at home, indoors where there were people smoking cigarettes (for example, at work)?***
Choices are “yes,” “no,” or “don’t know.” **If yes, record the total number of years you spent time indoors (away from home) with people who were smoking.**

At this point, the participant has completed the questionnaire. MESA staff will review the questionnaire for completeness, clarify any question that were not answered, and complete the questionnaire by filling out the box “For MESA Field Center Use Only:”

- If the form was self-administered, check for completeness.
- Mark if form was self-administered or interviewer-administered.
- Record Interviewer or Reviewer ID.
- Record Data Entry ID.