

## One in two S'pore residents value money, career over health: poll

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More than half respondents said they value money, career and looks over health. (Yahoo! file photo)

Career advancement, money and looks. Just over half of the respondents in a local poll named these as their greatest priorities in life instead of their health. The poll, conducted by Pfizer in August, surveyed 214 local residents for their understanding of hypertension (high blood pressure) and hyperlipidemia (high cholesterol levels) ahead of World Heart Day on Thursday. When asked about their greatest priority, 54.7 per cent of respondents did not view health as their top pick. Three in 10 said money came first and one in five felt career advancement was more important, findings showed. Only one in five respondents ranked heart disease to be their greatest health concern despite the disease being the leading cause of death worldwide according to the World Health Organisation. The poll also found a lack of knowledge of heart disease with only 20.6 per cent of respondents aware that it is the leading cause of death among women here. Most mistakenly believed that breast or cervical cancer claim more lives. Surprisingly, respondents with existing cardiovascular risk factors fared worse than their healthier counterparts in the basic understanding of high blood pressure and cholesterol levels. Among the respondents with high blood pressure and high cholesterol levels, only half said health and well-being was their greatest priority. Almost all respondents were aware of the causes of heart disease but about two in three admitted they had not taken enough measures to protect themselves against heart disease. Over 30 per cent of respondents did not adopt any measures to reduce the risks of heart disease such as exercising regularly, adopting a healthy diet, reducing the intake of alcohol or cutting down on cigarettes.

“Lifestyle changes and medication both play a role in the successful management of cardiovascular risk factors such as hypertension and hyperlipidemia,” said **Dr Eric Hong**, consultant cardiologist of EH Heart Specialist at Mount Elizabeth Medical Centre. “For this year’s World Heart Day, I hope Singaporeans will take a moment to think about our hearts, and how to be better informed about our own and our families’ heart health.”

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