



New inflammatory marker to identify blood vessel disease risk

A new inflammatory marker is influenced by our lifestyle choices and is linked to developing higher blood pressure and risk of blood vessel disease and death.

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Botha S, Fourie CMT, Schutte R, Eugen-Olsen J, Schutte AE. Soluble urokinase plasminogen activator receptor and hypertension among black South Africans after 5 years. *Hypertension Research* 2015; 38:439–444. <https://www.nature.com/articles/hr201522>

Botha S, Fourie CMT, Schutte R, Eugen-Olsen J, Pretorius R, Schutte AE. Soluble urokinase plasminogen activator receptor as a prognostic marker of all-cause and cardiovascular mortality in a black population. *International Journal of Cardiology* 2015; 184:631–636. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijcard.2015.03.041>

Botha S, Fourie CMT, Schutte R, Kruger A, Schutte AE. Associations of suPAR with lifestyle and cardiometabolic risk factors. *European Journal of Clinical Investigation* 2014; 44(7):619–626. <https://doi.org/10.1111/eci.12278>



Presented in association with North-West University and the Hypertension in Africa Research Team (HART), this programme forms part of #theArtofResearch, an initiative of research communication specialists Jive Media Africa.

All South Africans would like to live as happy, healthy individuals, for as long as possible; and we want the same for the people we care about.

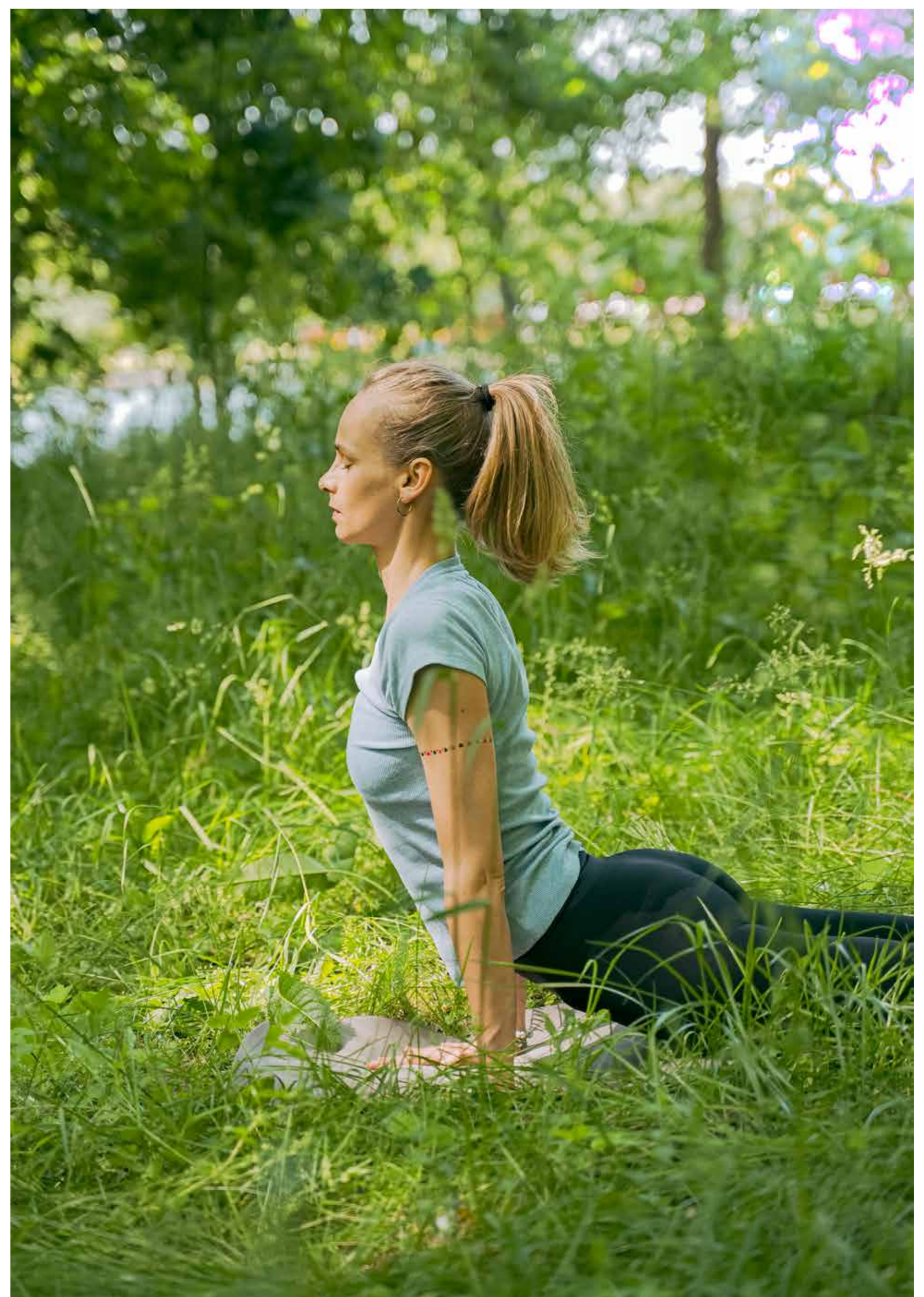
Compared with other causes of death, stroke and heart disease rates are the highest in South Africa, but still people do not realise until it is too late that they need to make a big effort to stay healthy.

Substances in the blood, called inflammatory markers, help to protect and heal the blood vessels when they get sick. Researchers in Denmark have discovered a specific inflammatory marker, called soluble urokinase plasminogen activator receptor, or, in short, suPAR. This marker is released into the blood when the blood vessels start to get sick, and can be used to determine a person’s risk of developing blood vessel disease.

Researchers at North-West University have now discovered that this is also the case in a South African population.

“More importantly, we have found that how you live influences suPAR and, therefore, the health of your blood vessels, and could lead to higher blood pressure and a higher risk of dying from heart and blood vessel diseases,” says Shani le Roux.

“Make sure that you eat healthily, move regularly, limit alcohol intake and try your best



A healthy lifestyle can put you at lower risk of heart disease.

to stop smoking. In this way, you might spend less on doctors’ bills, medicine and hospitals and be at lower risk of contracting blood

vessel and heart diseases in the future.”