



Revealed, the four dangers that can kill

FOUR "fatal behaviours" that combine to increase the chances of dying have been identified by scientists.

They are: smoking, lack of physical activity, poor diet and alcohol consumption.

Researchers in Norway collected lifestyle data on almost 5,000 adults aged 18 and over in 1984 and 1985.

Over the next 20 years a total of 1,080 participants died, 431 from heart and artery disease, 318 from cancer, and 331 from other causes.

Individuals with all four poor health behaviours were three times more likely to die of heart disease or cancer than those with none.

They also had four times the risk of dying from other causes. Their overall death risk was equivalent to being 12

years older than they were.

The findings were published yesterday in the journal Archives Of Internal Medicine.

The authors, led by Dr Elisabeth Kvaavik from the University of Oslo, concluded: "Modest but achievable adjustments to lifestyle behaviours are likely to have a considerable impact at both the individual and population level.

"Developing more efficacious methods by which to promote healthy diets and lifestyles across the population should be an important priority of public health policy."

Health experts have also issued a warning to Irish men, with one in 10 aged over 50 having suffered a heart attack compared to one in 20 women of the same age.

According to a survey of health of over 50s in Ireland,

more men suffer heart attacks. However, hypertension is the most common illness for men and women in this age group.

The study was carried out by UCD as part of the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE).

"Hypertension was identified as the most common illness for both men and women in this age group, with nearly 30pc of both genders suffering from the condition," said Professor Colm Harmon from the UCD Geary Institute.

"Over 25pc of men and women reported suffering from high cholesterol. Both arthritis and osteoporosis showed to be more common among women than men at 25pc to 16pc and 9pc to 1pc respectively.