

Cardiovascular Disease

CVD Fast Facts

- CVD causes more than 870,000 American deaths each year
- Nearly 2,400 Americans die of CVD each day
- CVD results in an average of one death every 37 seconds
- CVD is prevalent among all races, however it has a higher death rate among African Americans compared to the overall U.S. population
- While CVD affects both men and women, more women die from CVD than men

Impact of Cardiovascular Disease

More than 80 million, or one in three, Americans currently live with one or more types of cardiovascular disease. The estimated total direct and indirect cost, including health expenditures and lost productivity resulting from morbidity and mortality, of cardiovascular disease and stroke in 2010 in the United States is projected to be \$503.2 billion. Estimates are that the cost of treating cardiovascular disease could rise by 64 to 84 percent by 2025.

About Cardiovascular Disease

While great progress has been made in the prevention and management of cardiovascular disease (CVD) over the past 50 years, it remains the leading cause of death in the United States today.

Cardiovascular disease is a broad term to describe a variety of diseases that affect the heart and blood vessels including atherosclerosis, or the buildup of plaque in the arteries, high blood pressure and coronary heart disease, all which can lead to heart failure and stroke.

Causes and Risk Factors

Research shows that management of risk factors and lifestyle modification can reduce an individual's CVD risk.

The risk factors for cardiovascular disease include:

- **High cholesterol:** Buildup of cholesterol causes the narrowing of the arteries which can result in other complications.
 - More than 40 percent of U.S. adults with atherosclerotic cardiovascular conditions are not at recommended cholesterol levels.
- **High blood pressure:** Blood pressure is the force of blood pushing against the blood vessel walls. High blood pressure means the pressure in blood vessels is consistently higher than the normal range and can lead to stroke or heart attack.
 - The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimated that 90 percent of middle-aged Americans will develop high blood pressure in their lifetime and 70 percent who have it now do not have it controlled.
- **Smoking:** Smoking promotes atherosclerosis, increases the levels of blood clotting and raises blood pressure.
 - Smokers' risk of developing coronary heart disease is two to four times that of non-smokers.
- **Obesity:** Excess body fat is linked with higher LDL cholesterol levels, high blood pressure and diabetes.
 - The Framingham Heart Study found that obese individuals had twice the risk of heart failure as people with normal weight.
- **Diabetes:** Diabetes is a disease in which the body does not produce or properly use insulin, a hormone needed to convert sugar, starches and other food into energy needed for daily life.
 - It is estimated that at least 65 percent of people with diabetes die of some form of heart or blood vessel disease.
- **Physical inactivity:** Physical inactivity can impact other CVD risk factors including obesity, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and diabetes.
- **Poor diet:** Diet can affect other risk factors such as cholesterol, blood pressure, diabetes and obesity.
 - No more than 25 percent of Americans adhere to recommendations calling for no more than 30 percent of fat in diets.