

## Global Trends: Cardiovascular Disease

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is the leading cause of death globally<sup>1</sup>. It is caused by risk factors such as raised blood pressure, blood lipids, and obesity<sup>1</sup>. Central Asia and Eastern Europe are estimated to have the highest rates of CVD mortality, with the US mortality not far off<sup>3</sup>. Central Asia also has the highest age-standardized total CVD mortality at 516.9 deaths per 100,000 people<sup>3</sup>. I ranked cardiovascular disease of greatest importance because three-quarters of CVD deaths take place in low and middle income countries<sup>1</sup>. In 2019 alone, 32% of all global deaths were attributed to CVD with an estimated 17.9 million deaths<sup>1</sup>.

CVDs can be prevented by reducing different behavioral risk factors. Tobacco use, unhealthy diet, obesity, harmful alcohol use, and physical inactivity are significant risk factors that severely impact CVD dispositions - preventing blood flow from the heart through the blood vessels<sup>1</sup>. 20% of CVD alone are due to smoking<sup>2</sup>. The World Health Organization (WHO) implemented different target goals in 2013 to make cardiovascular disease reduction attainable<sup>1</sup>:

- Target 6: Reduce global prevalence of raised blood pressure by 25% between 2010 and 2025<sup>1</sup>.
- Target 8: At least 50% of eligible people should receive drug therapy and counseling (including glycemic control) to prevent heart attacks and strokes by 2025<sup>1</sup>.

By working towards the goals and targets set by the World Health Organization, prevention steps are being taken in reducing behavioral risk factors leading to the onset of cardiovascular diseases

## References

1. Cardiovascular diseases (CVDs). World Health Organization. [https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/cardiovascular-diseases-\(cvds\)](https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/cardiovascular-diseases-(cvds)). Published June 21, 2021. Accessed February 14, 2023.
2. Gallucci G, Tartarone A, Leroise R, Lalinga AV, Capobianco AM. Cardiovascular risk of smoking and benefits of smoking cessation. *J Thorac Dis.* 2020;12(7):3866-3876. doi:10.21037/jtd.2020.02.47
3. New report tracks latest trends in Global Cardiovascular Health. American College of Cardiology. <https://www.acc.org/About-ACC/Press-Releases/2022/12/12/19/20/New-Report-Tracks-Latest-Trends-in-Global-Cardiovascular-Health>. Published December 12, 2022. Accessed February 14, 2023.