

Heart disease and stroke continue to threaten US health

December 18 2013

Heart disease and stroke remain two of the top killers of Americans and pose a significant threat to millions of others, according to the American Heart Association's Heart Disease and Stroke Statistical Update 2014, published in its journal *Circulation*.

The update reflects the most up-to-date statistics on [heart disease](#), stroke, other vascular diseases and their risk factors. It is the only source for current prevalence data on cardiovascular health. Heart disease is the No. 1 cause of death in the U.S. and stroke is the No. 4 cause. The association compiles this update with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Institutes of Health and other government agencies.

What follows is information from the new Heart Disease, Stroke and Research Statistics at a Glance – a simple look at commonly referenced facts and figures from our statistical update.

Heart Disease, Stroke and other Cardiovascular Diseases

- More than 787,000 people in the U.S. died from heart disease, stroke and other cardiovascular diseases in 2010. That's about one of every three deaths in America.
- About 2,150 Americans die each day from these diseases, one every 40 seconds.
- Cardiovascular diseases claim more lives than all forms of cancer combined.

- About 83.6 million Americans are living with some form of cardiovascular disease or the after-effects of stroke.
- Direct and indirect costs of cardiovascular diseases and stroke total more than \$315.4 billion. That includes health expenditures and lost productivity.
- Nearly half of all African-American adults have some form of cardiovascular disease, 49 percent of [women](#) and 44 percent of men.
- Heart disease is the No. 1 cause of death in the world and the leading cause of death in the United States, killing almost 380,000 Americans a year.
- Heart disease accounts for 1 in 6 deaths in the U.S.
- Someone in the U.S. dies from heart disease about once every 90 seconds.

Heart Disease

- Over the past 10 years for which statistics are available, the death rate from heart disease has fallen about 39 percent – but the burden and risk factors remain alarmingly high.
- Heart disease strikes someone in the U.S. about once every 34 seconds.
- Heart disease is the No. 1 cause of death in the United States, killing almost 380,000 people a year.
- Heart disease is the No. 1 killer of women, taking more lives than all forms of cancer combined.
- Over the past 10 years for which statistics are available, the death rate from heart disease has fallen about 39 percent.
- Over 39,000 African-Americans died from heart disease in 2010, the most recent year for which statistics are available.
- Cardiovascular operations and procedures increased about 28 percent from 2000 to 2010, according to federal data, totaling about 7.6 million in 2010.

- About 720,000 people in the U.S. have heart attacks each year. Of those, about 122,000 die.
- About 620,000 people in the U.S. have a first-time heart attack each year, and about 295,000 have recurrent heart attacks.

Stroke

- Stroke is the No. 4 cause of death in the United States, killing more than 129,000 people a year.
- Stroke kills someone in the U.S. about once every four minutes.
- Over the past 10 years, the death rate from stroke has fallen about 36 percent and the number of stroke deaths has dropped about 23 percent.
- About 795,000 people have a stroke every year.
- Someone in the U.S. has a stroke about once every 40 seconds.
- Someone in the U.S. dies from a stroke every four minutes.
- Stroke causes 1 of every 19 deaths in the U.S.
- Stroke is a leading cause of disability.
- Stroke is the leading preventable cause of disability.
- African-Americans have nearly twice the risk for a first-ever stroke than white people, and a much higher death rate from stroke.

The American Heart Association gauges the cardiovascular health of the nation by tracking seven key health factors and behaviors that increase risks for heart disease and stroke. We call these "Life's Simple 7™" and we measure them to track progress toward our 2020 Impact Goal: to improve the cardiovascular health of all Americans by 20 percent and reduce deaths from cardiovascular diseases and stroke by 20 percent, by the year 2020. Life's Simple 7™ are: not smoking, physical activity, healthy diet, body weight, and control of cholesterol, blood pressure and blood sugar. Here are key facts related to these factors:

Smoking

- 18 percent of students grades 9-12 report being current smokers. Among adults, 21 percent of men and 16 percent of women are smokers.
- Among adults, those most likely to smoke were American Indian or Alaska Native men (24 percent), white men (24 percent), American Indian or Alaska Native women (24 percent), African-American men (23 percent), white women (20 percent), African-American women (17 percent), Hispanic men (16 percent), Asian men (15 percent), Hispanic women (9 percent), Asian women (6 percent)
- One in five nonsmokers between ages 12 and 17 is likely to start smoking. Mexican youths (29 percent) were most likely to start than African-Americans (23 percent) and whites (21 percent).

Physical Activity

- About one in every three U.S. adults – 30 percent – reports participating in no leisure time physical activity.
- Among students in grades 9-12, only about 29 percent meet the American Heart Association recommendation of 60 minutes of exercise every day. About 18 percent of girls and about 10 percent of boys reported less than an hour of aerobic activity in the past week.

Healthy Diet

- Less than 1 percent of U.S. adults meet the American Heart Association's definition for "Ideal Healthy Diet." Essentially no children meet the definition. Of the 5 components of a healthy diet, reducing sodium and increasing whole grains are the biggest challenges.

- Eating patterns have changed dramatically in recent decades. Research from 1971 to 2004 showed that women consumed an average of 22 percent more calories in that span and men consumed an average of 10 percent more. The average woman eats about 1,900 calories a day and the average man has nearly 2,700, according to the government figures.

Overweight/Obesity

- Most Americans older than 20 are overweight or obese. About 155 million U.S. adults – or about 68 percent – are overweight or obese.
- About 32 percent children are overweight or obese. About 24 million are overweight and about 13 million – 17 percent – are obese.

Cholesterol

- About 43 percent of Americans have total cholesterol higher of 200 or higher. The race and gender breakdown is:
 - 48 percent of Mexican-American men
 - 46 percent of white women
 - 45 percent of Mexican-American women
 - 41 percent of black women
 - 41 percent of white men
 - 39 percent of black men
- About 14 percent of Americans have total cholesterol over 240.
- Nearly one of every three Americans has high levels of LDL cholesterol (the "bad" kind).
- About 22 percent of Americans have low levels of HDL cholesterol (the "good" kind).

High Blood Pressure

- About 78 million U.S. adults have [high blood pressure](#). That's about 33 percent. About 75 percent of those are using antihypertensive medication, but only 53 of those have their condition controlled.
- About 69 percent of people who have a first heart attack, 77 percent of people who have a first [stroke](#) and 74 percent who have congestive heart failure have blood pressure higher than 140/90.
- Nearly half of people with high blood pressure (47 percent) do not have it under control.
- Hypertension is projected to increase about 8 percent between 2013 and 2030.
- Forty-four percent of African-Americans have high-blood pressure, among the highest rates of any population in the world. Here is the U.S. breakdown by race and gender.
 - 47 percent of African-American women have high blood pressure.
 - 43 percent of African-American men have high blood pressure.
 - 33 percent of white men have high blood pressure.
 - 31 percent of white women have high blood pressure.
 - 30 percent of Mexican-American men have high blood pressure.
 - 29 percent of Mexican-American women have high [blood pressure](#).

Blood Sugar/Diabetes

- About 20 million Americans have Type 2 diabetes. That's slightly

more than 8 percent of the adult population, but diabetes rates are growing. In fact, about 38 percent of Americans have prediabetes.

- African-Americans, Hispanics/Latinos and other ethnic minorities bear a disproportionate burden of Type 2 diabetes in the U.S.

Provided by American Heart Association

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