



Cardiovascular Diseases

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Cardiovascular diseases cover all diseases of the heart and blood vessels – including [heart attacks](#) and [strokes](#), [atherosclerosis](#), [ischemic heart disease](#), [hypertensive diseases](#), [cardiomyopathy](#), and others.

These diseases tend to develop gradually with age, especially when people have risk factors like high blood pressure, smoking, alcohol use, poor diet, and air pollution.

Together, cardiovascular diseases are the most common [cause of death](#) globally.

In 2000, around 14 million people died from cardiovascular diseases globally, while in 2019, close to 18 million died.

The rising death toll is largely due to a growing and aging global population. Death *rates* from cardiovascular diseases have actually fallen in many countries – as our ability to prevent and treat them has improved.

Large declines in [smoking](#); improvements in screening, diagnosis, and monitoring; and advances in medical treatments, public health initiatives, emergency care, and surgical procedures, have all helped to reduce the impact

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