

Global burden of coronary heart disease

"Misfortunes always come in by a door that has been left open for them."
Czechoslovakian proverb

Disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) lost can be thought of as "healthy years of life lost". They indicate the total burden of a disease, as opposed to simply the resulting deaths.

Cardiovascular disease is responsible for 10% of DALYs lost in low- and middle-income countries, and 18% in high-income countries.

A heart attack occurs when the blood vessels supplying the heart muscle become blocked, starving it of oxygen, leading to the heart muscle's failure or death. Heart attack has the same risk factors as CVD in general. Cold weather, exercise, or strong emotion can precipitate a heart attack.

Coronary heart disease is decreasing in many developed countries, but is increasing in developing and transitional countries, partly as a result of increasing longevity, urbanization, and lifestyle changes.

Risk of heart attack can change when people migrate. Japan has a low rate of coronary heart disease, but after moving to the USA, Japanese people have been found to have a gradually increasing risk. This eventually approaches that of people born in the USA.



Coronary heart disease burden is projected to rise from around 47 million DALYs globally in 1990 to 82 million DALYs in 2020.

More than 60% of the global burden of coronary heart disease occurs in developing countries.

