

Why is Cardiovascular Disease a Problem in Michigan?

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is Michigan's number one killer. In fact, Michigan consistently ranks high among states with the worst rates of CVD. In 2000, heart disease and stroke, the two diseases that account for the majority of CVD, claimed 33,263 Michigan lives—38% of all deaths.

In addition to being the leading cause of death in Michigan, CVD is a significant cause of illness, hospitalization and disability. It's not surprising, therefore, that CVD places an enormous economic strain on society. In Michigan alone, the economic burden of CVD is estimated at \$6.76 billion annually.

The fact that CVD is largely preventable represents the most tragic nature of this problem. A large number of deaths from CVD could be avoided through changes in life-style and behavior, such as controlling high blood pressure and high blood cholesterol, smoking cessation, increasing physical activity, improving nutrition, and maintaining a healthy weight. Unfortunately, eight out of ten Michigan adults have one or more CVD risk factor.

CVD potentially affects everyone—making the problem pervasive. It is the primary killer of both men and women in all racial and ethnic groups; however, certain groups experience a disproportionate burden of the disease. African Americans have significantly higher death rates for heart disease and stroke than other racial groups.

The Problem in Summary:

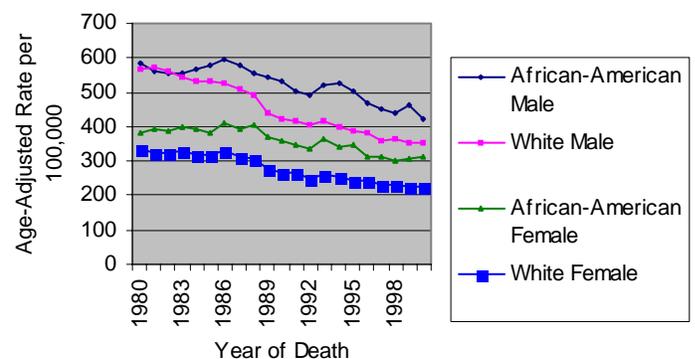
- ♥ CVD causes more deaths than the next *six* leading causes of death combined.
- ♥ CVD vastly reduces quality of life.
- ♥ CVD can affect anyone.
- ♥ CVD is preventable.

“We have the scientific knowledge to create a world in which most cardiovascular disease could be eliminated. In such a world, preventive practices would be incorporated early in life as a matter of course; everyone would have access to positive healthy living, smoke-free air, good nutrition, regular physical activity, and supportive living and working environments.”

Trends

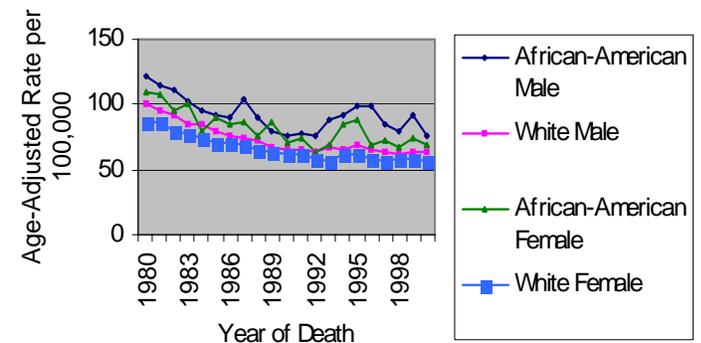
Exploring disease trends for CVD is both encouraging and distressing. Lives have been saved, indicative of declining heart disease and stroke death rates in past decades, but the decline has recently slowed. Further action is required to continue impacting death rates and to aggressively address disparities.

Michigan Age-Adjusted Mortality Rate for Diseases of the Heart by Race and Gender, 1989-2000



- ♥ Death rates from heart disease have declined in past decades, especially among whites, but the decline has recently slowed. Rates for African Americans are almost two times higher than whites.

Michigan Age-Adjusted Mortality Rate for Stroke by Race and Gender, 1980-2000



- ♥ Death rates from stroke showed a steady decline between 1980 and 1992. However, after 1992 the decline ended and then stabilized with slight increases thereafter.

Cardiovascular Disease Prevention Program — Meeting the Challenge

The mission of the Cardiovascular Health, Nutrition and Physical Activity Section is to provide leadership to create a heart healthy and stroke free Michigan by working to prevent and control cardiovascular risk factors, emphasizing physical activity, healthy eating and the reduction of health disparities; as well as creating environments that support healthy behaviors in communities, schools, health care systems and work sites.

Section Highlights

Primary Prevention

- Community Change Initiatives- Working with local partners to effect community changes that support healthy behaviors such as increasing opportunities for physical activity and healthy food.
- 5 A Day for Better Health Program- Collaborating with over 200 agencies to promote increased consumption of fruits and vegetables to an average of 5 or more servings a day.
- Youth Initiatives- Partnering with schools, communities and health care providers to implement interventions and trainings that promote healthy weight, increased physical activity and healthy eating.
- Priority Population Projects- Collaborating with community agencies, faith-based organizations, and hair salons to implement healthy eating, physical activity and obesity prevention strategies tailored to the needs of African American, Latino and elderly populations.

Secondary Prevention

- Michigan Stroke Initiative (MSI)- Partnering with over 30 diverse organizations to implement consensus recommendations, trainings and standards of care focused on improving stroke prevention and treatment around the state.
- Women & Cardiovascular Health Initiative- Implementing community grants that focus on healthy lifestyle initiatives to prevent and/or manage risk factors for heart disease and stroke.
- Managed Care Project- Working with the Michigan Association of Health Plans and 26 health plans around the state to integrate core measures for stroke and obesity into best practice models of care by educating providers and improving public awareness to facilitate self-management.
- Quality Improvement Program- Collaborating with health care providers and health systems around the state to improve the quality of care provided to those at-risk for and with heart disease and stroke.

Outreach and Training

- Outreach & Education Initiatives- Implementing initiatives to increase awareness of signs, symptoms and appropriate responses of heart attacks and stroke; as well as, to acknowledge the relationship between risk factors and development of heart disease and stroke.
- Provider Education, Trainings and Conferences- Collaborating with health care systems, managed care and providers to ensure use of standards of care for heart disease and stroke, and to ensure that they are educating their patients about risk factors.



Michigan's Successes- Improving the Odds

Cardiovascular disease death rates are declining faster than the national rates. Over the last decade, Michigan has improved its national ranking in cardiovascular disease deaths, currently ranking 41st in the United States in 2000, compared to 46th in 1989. Michigan's prevention-oriented activities have contributed to this rate of improvement. Prevention programs continue to be critical in our battle to reduce the high rate of cardiovascular disease in Michigan and to contain associated health care costs. The real benefits are reducing cardiovascular disease risks and saving lives.

Beyond Statistics. . . Impacting Lives

"As a result of the screening, one of our employees had triple bypass surgery, which probably saved his life."

-Worksite Grant Recipient

"This program taught me how to lose weight. When I began losing weight, my high blood pressure dropped and my diabetes improved."

- Program Participant