

## Epidemiology of cardiovascular disease and associated risk factors in Gaza - Palestine

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**Aim of study:** To determine the prevalence of cardiovascular disease and associated risk factors in the population of Gaza strip in Palestine.

**Methods:** A cross sectional stratified cluster sample design was applied in this study. A sample of 2240 participants (1121 males and 1119 females) aged > 25 years participated in the study. For each individual, trained staff administered a questionnaire, where all variables of interest followed WHO's STEP wise approach to surveillance chronic disease risk factors (STEPS) (WHO 2001). Sociodemographic data, anthropometric measure (body mass index, blood pressure), and biochemical test (blood sugar and lipids profiles) were measured. Short International Physical Activity (IPAQ) questionnaire form was used. We used SPSS (version 22.0) to analyze the data.

**Results:** The most common condition was coronary artery disease (8.3%), followed by cerebrovascular events (3%). The associated risk factors were obesity (47.8%), hypertension (28.4%), current smoking account for (23.2%), diabetes mellitus (19.1%), high cholesterol level (8.8%), and high triglycerides level (40.2%). Additionally, physical activity was found to be low (48.3%); particularly with increasing age. More than 30% of the population has less than 4 days of consumption of fruit and vegetables per week and 65.9% has less than 2 servings per day.

**Conclusion:** The burden of CVDs and their associated risk factors is considerable in Gaza and represents a major public health concern. Effective strategies in management, education and healthcare centers are required for an accurate management and implementation of preventive measure in this area.

### Recent Publications

1. Mendis S, Puska P, Norrving B, Organization WH, Federation WH, Organization WS. Global atlas on cardiovascular disease prevention and control [Internet]. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2011 [cited 2017 Feb 14]. Available from: <http://www.who.int/iris/handle/10665/44701>
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