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### History of Cardiovascular Disease: An Overview

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Cardiovascular disease is a term used to describe a large range of diseases that affect the heart or blood vessels. There are various diseases considered as cardiovascular disease includes coronary artery disease, heart attack, heart failure, high blood pressure and stroke.

The term "cardiovascular disease" is often used interchangeably with "heart disease" because both terms refer to diseases of the heart or arteries. Whatever name is used — cardiovascular disease or heart disease – it is clear that diseases of the heart and blood vessels are serious problems. Cardiovascular disease is the No. 1 worldwide killer of men and women, as mention previously under "Cardiovascular Disease Statistics"<sup>1</sup>

Cardiovascular disease is an established chronic disease for the population of developed and developing countries. Chronic diseases are illnesses that are

prolonged, do not resolve spontaneously, and are rarely cured completely. Cardiovascular disease refers to variety of diseases and conditions affecting the heart and blood vessels. The major cardiovascular diseases are coronary Cardiovascular Disease (CHD), myocardial infarction (MI), stroke and congestive heart failure (CHF). Cardiovascular diseases are preventable. This disease causes a significant burden in mortality, morbidity, and health care cost. Despite the gradual decline in cardiovascular death rates over the last few decades, these diseases are and will remain

the number one cause of death in industrialized countries.<sup>2</sup>

In this region, 48.6 percent of deaths were caused by cardiovascular disease in the year 2000 (WHO1, 2002). By 2020, 46.4 percent deaths are expected to be attributable to CVD in this region. Moreover, CVD will soon become the main cause of death and disability in the developing world as well; by 2020, a third (33.8 percent) of all death are expected to be due to CVD (WHO, 2002). In the year 2000, 16.7 million people died from CVD, accounting for 30.3 percent of all deaths worldwide; more than half of these deaths were in developing countries (WHO, 2001). Not only is cardiovascular disease a considerable health burden (e.g. high morbidity and high mortality), it causes also a significant health care cost (i.e. economic burden), which will continue to grow as the population ages.<sup>3</sup>

The ongoing economic and technological developments taking place in the developing countries will in all likelihood cause the pattern seen in developed world to be repeated. The epidemic of cardiovascular disease is expected initially to emerge in those who are wealthy and subsequently to spread to those who are less wealthy.

Likewise, when the epidemic starts to slow, this will first become apparent among the affluent, with the disease continuing to have a high prevalence in those who live in poverty. The burden of CVD, although already high in developed world, is therefore expected to increase on a global scale as the developing countries start to contribute significantly to this (WHO, 2002). The presence of rising CVD underscores the imperative need to develop effective and appropriate prevention policies.<sup>4</sup>

#### Reference:

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