



HEART FACTS

- The word cardiovascular comes from a Greek word cardiac meaning heart, and latin word vasculum meaning vessel. The cardiovascular system comprises the heart and blood vessels, arteries, veins and capillaries.
- 280,000 Australians of all age groups suffer from heart disease
- Heart disease does not discriminate – it strikes young and old
- The heart is fatigue resistant
- The heart contracts unrelentlessly approximately 70 times a minute, 100,000 times a day, two and a half billion times a lifetime
- The heart pumps between 70 ml and 100 ml of blood each beat
- The heart pumps blood to the lungs, back to the heart, out to the body and back to the heart again in about 23 seconds.
- The heart is the first organ to begin functioning during embryonic life
- Despite recent progress, heart disease claims the life of one Australian every 10 minutes (1)
- In 2000, 12,469 Australian women died from coronary heart disease. That is 5 times as many deaths from breast cancer. (1)
- In Australia, the number of heart failure deaths is 1.7 times higher in woman than in men. (1)
- Women have an average of ten to fifteen years free of coronary heart disease when compared with men and as a consequence are much older than their male counterparts when symptoms develop. (1)
- In Australia the life expectancy of women is 82.0 years compared with 76.6 years for men. (1)

- For a 40 year old, the risk of having coronary heart disease at some time in their future is one in two for men and one in three for women. (1)
- The health and economic burden of cardiovascular disease (CVD) exceeds that of any other disease. (1)
- Cardiovascular disease was the leading cause of death in Australia in 2000, ahead of all cancers and other groups of causes of death, accounting for 49,741 deaths or 39% of all deaths. (1)
- During 1990-2000 , death rates from Cardiovascular Disease fell by 4.2% per year for males and 4.0% per year for females. (1)
- People with a history of CHD account for 5% of the population but 31% of coronary events. (2)
- Each year, around 40,000 Australians have a stroke, with 70% of these being first-ever strokes. (1)
- Over 90% of heart attack victims survive especially if treated at a world class medical facility such as St Vincent's Hospital
- Despite this, 50% of those survivors go on to develop heart failure because of the critical loss of heart muscle.
- There are over 3000 children, teenagers and adults who are waiting desperately for heart, kidney or lung transplants
- The first heart transplant in Australia was performed at ST Vincent's hospital in 1968
- The first heart lung transplant was performed at St Vincent's Hospital in 1986
- The First single lung transplant was performed in Australia in 1990 and the first bilateral lung transplant in 1992.

References:

- (1) Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2001. Australia's Health 2002 Canberra: AIHW
- (2) Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2001. Heart,stroke and vascular diseases: Australian Facts 2001. AIHW Cat No. CVD 13. Canberra: AIHW, National Heart Foundation of Australia, National Stroke Foundation of Australia (Cardiovascular Disease Series No. 14)