

WORLDWIDE DATA ON CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASES

VALERICA LUMINIȚA CIOCA¹

¹PhD candidate, "Lucian Blaga" University of Sibiu

Keywords: chronic diseases, cardiovascular diseases

Abstract: Contemporary medicine knows rather little about the causes of chronic diseases. WHO's statistics indicates that every year 10% from the world population die because of cardiovascular diseases. According to a recent report of WHO, the annual production losses generated by cardiovascular diseases rise to more than 1 million Euro.

Cuvinte cheie: boli cronice, cardiovasculare

Rezumat: Bolile cronice au cauze despre care medicina contemporană știe încă foarte puțin. Statistica OMS precizează că în fiecare an, 10% din populația planetei moare din cauza bolilor cardiovasculare. Potrivit unui raport recent al OMS, pierderile de producție generate de bolile cardiovasculare ajung la peste 1 miliard de euro anual.

Motto: "Health is the most precious treasure and the most easily lost, though the worst kept" E. Augier

Contemporary medicine knows rather little about the causes of chronic diseases. The main reason why the current medical knowledge and technologies are still insufficient or too little prepared to face the spreading of such diseases is their multiple causality determined both by the physical and social environment.

Although most chronic diseases are the direct effect of the aging process, some of them are not necessarily the result of this process. Cardiovascular diseases, for example, may have an early start, ever since individual's childhood, and a progressive development in active population.

The multitude causes for chronic disease and implicitly for cardiovascular diseases, require better attention paid by physicians to the issues related to the "lifestyle" of sick persons and their family or professional relations, in order to identify those social factors which could positively influence the effectiveness of a treatment.

The term "cardiovascular diseases" is assigned to a large number of diseases affecting heart and blood vessels, such as ischemic cardiopathy, cerebrovascular affections, arterial hypertension or peripheral arterial disease, myocarditis, congenital heart diseases, myocardial infarction, angina, etc.

According to WHO / World Health Organization – cardiovascular diseases and cancers are the first three death causes in people over 20 years old.

For developed countries, cardiovascular diseases are considered a social scourge, featuring the characteristics of a world endemic malady.

Statistics on cardiovascular diseases are alarming: at world level 17 million people die of such diseases every year; one death occurs every 2 seconds, one heart attack every 5 seconds, one brain attack every 6 seconds. From the 10 million people who annually survive to a cerebral vascular accident (CVA), more than 5 million remain with permanent disabilities, becoming a burden for their families and communities.

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At the 17th Conference on cardiovascular diseases and CVA, John Norrie, a British specialist in statistics and clinical surveys, specified that, additionally to the very high health costs, there must also be considered the very big economic losses suffered because of the deaths caused by cardiovascular diseases. These losses rise to approximately 35 billion Euro / year, representing 21% from the total costs assigned to these diseases.

According to a recent report of WHO, the annual production losses generated by cardiovascular diseases rise to more than 1 million Euro.

The international medical community is currently concerned with cardiovascular diseases and encourages any intervention designed to positively influence the evolution and predictability of these affections.

In 2001, cardiovascular diseases caused 1/3 of the total number of deaths at world level. The most significant incidence of these affections, representing 78% of all deaths, is registered in countries with low and average revenue, including Romania. In 2001, the world registered 7.2 million deaths caused by coronary disease and 5.5 million deaths caused by CVA.

WHO concludes that the top of fatal diseases has remained the same since 1990, when the organization made the first research of this kind. Heart diseases, infectious diseases and cancer remain the first three death causes in the world. WHO's report is based on the death data collected from 112 countries in 2004.

In Europe 49% of deaths are caused by cardiovascular diseases, while in population under 65 the percentage is 30%. One man from 9 and one woman from 17 die before turning 65, also because of cardiovascular diseases.

Compared to other peoples, the inhabitants of central and Eastern Europe have registered the largest number of infarctions and deaths caused by such diseases.

A study presented by cardiologist Magnus Ohman at the World Congress of Cardiology – Barcelona 2006, blames the genetic factors, different diet, culture and access to medical services. Dr. Magnus Ohman, cardiologist at "Duke Medical university (U.S.A.), showed that more than 10% of the East

¹Corresponding Author: Valerica Luminița Cioca, 2 Dorobanți street, Ap 2, 120089, Buzau, Romania, e-mail: cma_cioca@yahoo.com, tel +40-0745606580

Europeans and 9% of the Central Europeans dies or suffered from infarction, while only 7.3% of the Americans did. He centralized data from the medical registers of 44 countries and reached the following results: 4% of the East Europeans, 3.58% of the Central Europeans and 3.37 of the Americans died of the heart disease they had suffered from. Compared to the Europeans, the Americans receive more information about heart diseases and know how to maintain them under control, which has determined a decrease of the death rate every year. The survey performed by the American cardiologist shows that heart diseases and CVA now affect not only the strongly industrialized western peoples, but they have spread in the whole world. The patients-subjects of the survey were selected from 7 different regions: North America, Western, Eastern and Central Europe, Asia and Australia. The research was made on a sample of 68 000 people. Dr. Ohman concluded that "heart attack is a serious international issue" and "the spreading of western culture in the world had an impact on health, too".

The researchers from the Social medicine Institutes of Berlin mapped cardiovascular diseases using green, orange, yellow and red colors for the number of deaths registered annually in the European countries – green for the smallest number and red for the largest number of deaths. For developing such maps, the German researchers used the figures related to mortality in people between 45 and 74, based on Eurostat Report 2000. The survey was published in the Magazine of the European Society of Cardiology.

The researchers, coordinated by Jacqueline Muller-Nordhorn, structured the epidemiologic data collected from different national registers, about deaths caused by brain attack and deaths caused by ischemic pathologies. In the first case, they indicated a small number of deaths in Central and North Europe (Switzerland, Netherlands, Norway), while the number is increasing as advancing to the east. In the second case, the highest death rates are registered in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, while in the south the figures are much reduced. France, Portugal, Italy and Spain have the smallest number of deaths, besides Sweden and Norway.

To explain these differences between countries, specialists listed several risk factors: revenue, professional status, stress, depression, hypertension, obesity, diet or medication.

The Chairman of the European Society of Cardiology (ESC), the French Jean Pierre Bassand considers cardiovascular diseases as being "by far more homicidal than the plague of the Middle Ages".

Cardiovascular diseases affect more and more middle-aged people, reducing their revenue and saving potential. In 2003, The European Union paid 169 billion Euros with cardiovascular diseases, while the annual cost of the United States was estimated to 403 billion dollars in 2006. A decrease of mortality and morbidity caused by cardiovascular diseases would have a major benefic effect on the increasing costs of medical attendance and would be favorable to the socio-economic development of communities and nations.

In 2007 S.U.A. assigned 3 billion dollars for scientific medical research on heart diseases, while the European annual costs with cardiovascular diseases rise to 372 Euros per capita. Costs vary across Member States from approximately 35 Euros per capita in Romania, to more than 600 Euros per capita in Germany and the United Kingdom.

The proportion of cardiovascular diseases is lowering in the industrialized countries. This decline results from the successful primary prophylaxy and treatment. The methods which gave good results in the industrialized countries may be equally efficient in developing countries, provided that equity

should be provided for the whole population.

Modern medicine disposes of efficient prevention and control methods for these diseases, but they are conditioned by the population raised awareness and their active attendance of the prevention and control programs. A recent report of WHO indicates that the rate of death caused by cardiovascular diseases could be reduced by 75% and their incidence could be 50% less if the prevention and early detection programs are applied at a large scale.

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