

## Heart attack

Heart attack, also known as 'acute myocardial infarction' is a life-threatening event that occurs when a blood vessel supplying the heart itself is suddenly blocked completely, threatening to damage the heart muscle and its functions.<sup>1</sup>

### Mortality

Heart attack claimed 8,623 lives in 2014, or on average, 24 each day.<sup>2</sup>

In the last 10 years (from 2005 to 2014), the number of heart attack deaths fell by 27% from 11,861 to 8,623.<sup>2</sup>

### Hospitalisation

Heart attacks were the main cause for over 54,000 hospitalisations in 2013/14. The number of hospital separations due to heart attack has increased by 15% from 2003/04 to 2013/14.<sup>3</sup>

The average length of stay has fallen by more than one day, from 6.1 to 4.7 days.<sup>3</sup>

### Prevalence

It is estimated 430,100 Australians have had a heart attack at some time in their lives.<sup>4</sup>

More than 100,000 Australians who have had a heart attack are under the age of 65.<sup>4</sup>

### Morbidity risks

Men aged 45 years with two or more risk factors had a 49.5 per cent chance of having a cardiovascular event by age 80. Men with no risk factors only had a 1.4 per cent chance of having a cardiovascular event by age 80.<sup>5</sup>

Women aged 45 years old with two or more risk factors had a 30.7 per cent chance of having a major cardiovascular event by age 80.<sup>5</sup>

Women with no risk factors only had a 4.1 per cent chance of having a major cardiovascular event by age 80.<sup>5</sup>

### Understanding heart attack

More than half of Australians (53%) believe they are confident in knowing what to do if faced with having a heart attack. However, less than half of Australians (46%) believe that heart attack is personally relevant to them.<sup>6</sup>

In 2015, more than one in three (37%) Australians have known someone who has had a heart attack.<sup>6</sup>

### Told by a doctor...

In 2015, one million (or one in eleven) Australians aged 30 to 65 were told by a doctor that they have a high risk of having a heart attack.<sup>6</sup>

### Life after a heart attack...

A study in 2015 revealed that close to one in two Australians who have had a heart attack continue to smoke after their heart attack. Of these, more than one in ten did not even attempt to quit.<sup>7</sup>

Another concerning outcome post heart attack is one in five are not regularly taking their medication, with an additional one in five not having regular blood pressure checks, and more than one in four also not having regular cholesterol checks.<sup>7</sup>

Around one in three tried to increase their physical activity levels or lose weight, however failed to maintain the changes.<sup>7</sup>

### References:

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