



Disease overview

Extracted from *Australia's health 2008*

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Pages 173-259

Key points

- Among the broad categories of disease, cancer is the leading cause of disease burden (19% of Australia's total), closely followed by cardiovascular disease (18%), then mental disorders (13%). *Note: Burden of disease refers to the health burden that diseases, injuries and risk factors place on populations.*
- Death rates are falling for many of our leading health concerns: cancer, heart disease, strokes, injury and asthma are examples.
- Heart attack rates are falling and survival from the attacks is improving.
- Survival is improving for cancer overall.
- Asthma has become less common among children and young adults.
- Diabetes is becoming more common—prevalence at least doubling in the past two decades.
- There has been a tripling in new cases of treated end-stage kidney disease in the past 25 years.

Burden of diseases for conditions

Broad cause group	Specific categories	Proportion of burden (per cent)	Fatal component ^(a) (per cent)
Cancers		19.4	82
Cardiovascular disease		18.0	78
Diabetes		5.5	22
Chronic kidney disease ^(b)		n.a.	n.a.
Chronic respiratory disease	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD)	3.3	54
	Asthma	2.4	6
Musculoskeletal disease		4.0	7
Neurological and sense disorders	Dementia	3.6	26
Mental disorders		13.3	7
Oral health problems		0.9	0
Injury		7.0	76
Infectious diseases		1.7	69
<i>Total in this chapter</i>		79.1	
All diseases		100.0	

(a) Proportion of burden due to premature death, with the remainder being due to years lived with disability.

(b) Chronic kidney disease is not quantified separately in the Burden of Disease study.

Source: Begg et al. 2007.

Note: Total in this chapter refers to Australia's health 2008 Chapter 5.