

Chronic diseases and associated risk factors in Australia, 2001



Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
Canberra

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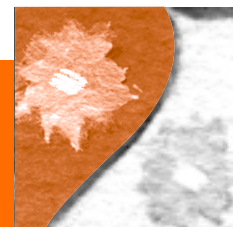
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Contents



List of tables	iv
List of figures	v
Preface	vii
Acknowledgements	viii
Abbreviations	ix
1 Introduction	1
2 Chronic diseases	15
2.1 Coronary heart disease	17
2.2 Stroke	24
2.3 Lung cancer	30
2.4 Colorectal cancer	36
2.5 Depression	42
2.6 Diabetes	48
2.7 Asthma	55
2.8 Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	62
2.9 Chronic renal disease	68
2.10 Oral diseases	75
2.11 Arthritis	82
2.12 Osteoporosis	88
3 Risk factors	95
3.1 Poor diet and nutrition	98
3.2 Physical inactivity	104
3.3 Tobacco	108
3.4 Alcohol misuse	114
3.5 High blood pressure	119
3.6 High blood cholesterol	123
3.7 Excess weight	126
Appendixes	133
Methods, classifications and data sources	134
Glossary	143



List of tables

Table 2.1.1:	Coronary heart disease deaths attributable to various risk factors, 1996	19
Table 2.2.1	Stroke deaths attributable to various risk factors, 1996	25
Table 2.4.1:	Absolute risk of developing colorectal cancer, by age	38
Table 2.7.1:	Death rates for asthma in metropolitan, rural and remote areas, 1994–1998	58
Table 2.7.2:	Hospital separation rates for asthma in metropolitan, rural and remote areas, 1996–98	60
Table 2.10.1:	Periodontal problems of persons aged 10 or more, 1987–88	76
Table 3.0.1:	Relationships between various chronic diseases, conditions and risk factors	97
Table 3.1.1:	Comparison of food intake with recommended levels, 1995	100
Table 3.1.2:	Comparison of nutrient intake in Australia, 1980s and 1995 ^{1,2}	101
Table 3.4.1:	Classification of alcohol intake levels	114
Table 3.7.1:	Prevalence (%) of excess weight by BMI, adults (aged 25 and above), 1999–2000	128
Table 3.7.2:	Prevalence (%) of excess weight as measured by waist circumference, adults (aged 25 and above), 1999–2000	128
Table 3.7.3.	Changes in the prevalence of overweight and obesity in children, aged 7–15, between 1985 and 1995	130
Table 3.7.4:	Deaths attributable to overweight and obesity, 1996	130

List of figures



Figure 1.0.1:	Number of people with a disability associated with various chronic diseases and conditions, 1998	7
Figure 1.0.2:	Number of deaths due to various chronic diseases and conditions, 1998	8
Figure 1.0.3:	DALYs attributed to various chronic diseases and conditions, 1996	9
Figure 1.0.4:	A framework for the surveillance and monitoring of chronic diseases	11
Figure 2.1.1:	Fatal and non-fatal heart heart events among those aged 35–69 years, 1993–94 and 1997–98	18
Figure 2.1.2:	Death rates for coronary heart disease, 1950 to 1998	20
Figure 2.1.3:	Age-specific death rates for coronary heart disease, 1998	20
Figure 2.1.4:	International comparison of death rates for coronary heart disease, 1997	21
Figure 2.2.1:	Death rates for stroke, 1950 to 1998	26
Figure 2.2.2:	Age-specific death rates for stroke, 1998	27
Figure 2.2.3:	International comparison of death rates for stroke, 1997	27
Figure 2.3.1:	Mortality to incidence ratio (MIR) for selected cancers, 1998	30
Figure 2.3.2:	Age-specific incidence and death rates for lung cancer, 1998	32
Figure 2.3.3:	Per capita consumption of tobacco and death rates for lung cancer, 1945 to 1998	32
Figure 2.3.4:	International comparison of death rates for lung cancer, 1997	33
Figure 2.3.5:	Incidence rates for lung cancer, 1983 to 1998	34
Figure 2.4.1:	Five-year survival ratios for colorectal cancer	36
Figure 2.4.2:	Causes of colorectal cancer	37
Figure 2.4.3:	Death rates for colorectal cancer, 1950 to 1998	39
Figure 2.4.4:	Age-specific death rates for colorectal cancer, 1998	39
Figure 2.4.5:	Age-specific incidence of colorectal cancer, 1998	40
Figure 2.5.1:	Age-specific suicide rates, 1998	44
Figure 2.5.2:	Age-specific prevalence of depression, 1998	45
Figure 2.5.3:	Age-specific hospital use for depression, 1999–00	45
Figure 2.6.1:	Prevalence of overweight and obesity among persons aged 30 years and over with Type 2 diabetes and in the general population, 1995	50
Figure 2.6.2:	Diabetes death rates, 1950 to 1998	51
Figure 2.6.3:	Age-specific prevalence of diabetes (Type 1 and Type 2), 1999–2000	51

List of figures continued...

Figure 2.6.4:	Persons with and without diabetes reporting other diseases and conditions, 1995	53
Figure 2.7.1:	Age-specific death rates for asthma, 1998	57
Figure 2.7.2:	Death rates for asthma, 1958 to 1998	57
Figure 2.7.3:	Age-specific hospital separation rates for asthma, 1999–00	59
Figure 2.8.1:	Age-specific death rates for COPD, 1998	64
Figure 2.8.2:	Death rates for COPD, 1958 to 1998	65
Figure 2.8.3:	Age-specific hospital separation rates for COPD, 1999–00	66
Figure 2.9.1:	Age-specific death rates for chronic renal disease, 1998	70
Figure 2.9.2:	Death rates for chronic renal disease, 1987 to 1998	71
Figure 2.9.3:	Age-specific incidence of ESRD cases, 1998	71
Figure 2.9.4:	Trends in the numbers of functioning transplants and dialysis patients, 1989 to 1998	72
Figure 2.10.1:	Edentulous persons, by age group, 1979 to 1996	77
Figure 2.10.2:	Children's experience of decayed, missing or filed teeth, by geographic location, 1996	78
Figure 2.10.3:	Social impact of oral diseases and disorders in last 12 months, 1999	78
Figure 2.10.4:	Time since last visit by dentate adults coming for a check-up or for a problem, 1994–96	79
Figure 2.11.1:	Age-specific prevalence of arthritis (any form), 1995	85
Figure 2.11.2:	Age-specific prevalence of osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis, 1995	85
Figure 2.11.3:	Age-specific prevalence of disability due to arthritis	86
Figure 2.12.1:	Changes in bone mass with age	90
Figure 2.12.2:	Age-specific prevalence of osteoporosis, 1995	91
Figure 3.0.1:	Relationships of risk factors and chronic diseases	96
Figure 3.2.1:	Levels of physical activity, adults aged 18–75, 1999	106
Figure 3.2.2:	Trends in insufficient levels of activity, 1997 and 1999	106
Figure 3.3.1:	Proportion of regular smokers, by age group, 1998	110
Figure 3.3.2:	Tobacco smoking, persons aged 14 and over, 1991 to 1998	110
Figure 3.3.3:	Proportion of adolescents (aged 12–17) who are smokers, 1984 to 1996	111
Figure 3.3.4:	Tobacco consumption (kg per person aged 15 and over), 1945 to 1998	112
Figure 3.4.1:	Hazardous or harmful drinking, 1998	116
Figure 3.4.2:	Alcohol use, persons aged 14 and over, 1991 to 1998	117
Figure 3.5.1:	Age-specific prevalence of high blood pressure, 1999–2000	121
Figure 3.5.2:	Prevalence of high blood pressure among those aged 25–64, 1980 to 1999	121
Figure 3.6.1:	Age-specific prevalence of high blood cholesterol, 1999–2000	124
Figure 3.6.2:	High blood cholesterol among those aged 25–64, 1980–99	125
Figure 3.7.1:	Proportion of adults (aged 25–64) overweight or obese, 1980 to 2000	129

Preface



We have marked the end of the twentieth century, and proudly reflect upon the advances in health and health care that have been achieved in that period. Technological and biological breakthroughs over the last several decades have led to exciting, even startling, advances in the fight against disease. But we still have a long way to go in meeting significant challenges to the health of Australians, in particular those imposed by the chronic diseases and their risk factors.

This report documents just how much of the burden of disease in Australia is due to major chronic diseases. But, we can not reasonably expect to meet this challenge by breakthroughs in biological and medical sciences alone because a significant proportion of these diseases is behavioural in origin. Progress must occur by focusing on modifiable risk factors such as smoking, poor nutrition, alcohol misuse and physical inactivity.

Recognising the need to respond to this growing challenge, the Australian Health Ministers' Advisory Council has endorsed a Chronic Disease Prevention Framework, and requested the National Public Health Partnership Group to develop a national agenda on the issue and advise it on an action plan. This is in step with the World Health Organization's global strategy for the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases. Effective surveillance and monitoring are integral to both strategies.

The National Public Health Information Working Group, a subgroup of the National Public Health Partnership, is progressing the surveillance and monitoring of chronic diseases nation-wide. A first step in this direction is to take stock and generate baseline information. The Working Group has established a subcommittee to oversee this work.

This report, produced by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, examines the most significant chronic diseases affecting Australians including cancer, coronary heart disease, stroke, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and depression. The focus of the report is also on common behavioural risk factors that significantly contribute to the development of these diseases and conditions. In addition to providing information on death, disease and disability associated with chronic diseases, the report attempts risk factor profiles of the Australian population as a whole and its population subgroups where possible.

It is hoped that the report will be useful to policy makers, risk factor prevention specialists, the wider health community, the non-government sector and consumers.

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Abbreviations

AACR	Australian Association of Cancer Registries
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
AGPS	Australian Government Publishing Service
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
ANZDATA	Australia and New Zealand Dialysis and Transplant Registry
AusDiab	The Australian Diabetes, Obesity and Lifestyle Study
BEACH	Bettering the Evaluation And Care of Health
BMI	Body mass index
CHD	Coronary heart disease
COPD	Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
CRC	Colorectal cancer
DALY	Disability-adjusted life year
DHAC	Department of Health and Aged Care
DSRU	Dental Statistics and Research Unit
ESRD	End-stage renal disease
ETS	Environmental tobacco smoke
GP	General practitioner
ICD-9	International Classification of Diseases, 9th Revision
ICD-10-AM	International Classification of Diseases, 10th Revision, Australian modification
NCSCH	National Cancer Statistics Clearing House
NDSHS	National Drug Strategy Household Survey
NHFA	National Heart Foundation Australia
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council
NHS	National Health Survey
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
RRMA	Rural, Remote and Metropolitan Areas classification
SLA	Statistical Local Area
WHO	World Health Organization
YLL	Years of life lost due to premature mortality
YLD	Years of healthy life lost due to disability