

Preventing heart disease requires a universal approach

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Preventive cardiology is now on the political as well as clinical agenda. In 2011 a UN heads-of-state meeting agreed to reduce mortality from chronic non-communicable diseases (NCDs) by 25% by 2025.

The facts (and the social pressure) before the politicians were unequivocal:

- Cardiovascular diseases account for most NCD deaths in the world, or 17 million people annually - followed by cancers (7.6 million), [respiratory diseases](#) (4.2 million), and diabetes (1.3 million).
- These four groups of diseases account for around 80% of all NCD deaths.
- They share four risk factors: [tobacco use](#), physical inactivity, the harmful use of alcohol and unhealthy diets.

While these [chronic diseases](#) are often associated with older age groups, evidence shows that more than 9 million of all deaths attributed to NCDs occur before the age of 60. Children, adults and the elderly are all vulnerable to the risk factors, whether from unhealthy diets, [physical inactivity](#), exposure to [tobacco smoke](#) or the effects of the harmful use of alcohol.

This year's EuroPREvent congress, already the world's leading forum for the presentation of new research in preventive cardiology, has adopted as

its theme the Universal Approach to Preventive Cardiology and includes in the scientific programme sessions on how to achieve the UN's target of a 25% [mortality reduction](#) by 2025. Professor Volker Adams, Chairperson of the Congress Programme Committee highlights that "as is now increasingly recognised and as this congress will reflect, the prevention of CVD cannot be achieved by [cardiologists](#) alone. A team approach is needed including exercise physiologists, nutritionists, psychologists and governments. Prevention networks will be an important feature at EuroPREvent."

Among the congress's sessions are two conventions of the Global Forum on CVD Prevention in Clinical Practice, in which national and international associations outline their strategies to achieve NCD mortality targets. "Key messages still relate to banning tobacco use, promoting healthy diets, increasing physical exercise and moderating alcohol consumption," says Professor Stephan Gielen, President of the European Association for Cardiovascular Prevention and Rehabilitation (EACPR), the congress organisers. "CVD is preventable," he adds, "but lifestyles must change and this will only come about with a concerted effort."

Also on the congress's political agenda is a presentation on the impact of the Lazy Town TV series in the USA. The series encourages children in a fun and creative way to adopt a healthy diet and daily physical activity - and is featured here as an example of how to convey preventive messages to a young audience.

More than 550 abstracts of new scientific research in CVD prevention have been accepted for this congress, and many will provide much public health interest. The leading nations reporting new studies are Italy (the congress's host country), Russia, Spain, Germany and UK.

EuroPREvent 2013 will take place at the Palazzo dei Congressi in Rome,

Italy, from 18-20 April 2013.

The event promises to be the leading event of the year in preventive cardiology and we encourage you to mark the event in your news diaries. The scientific programme contains many new reports on a subject which is traditionally of great public interest.

Building on Italy's emphasis on sports medicine, the congress will open with a Master Class on Diagnostic imaging in Sports Cardiology , highlighting its importance in prevention and rehabilitation. A screening protocol developed by the EACPR has the power to identify (or raise suspicion for) most of the cardiac disease at risk.

Other scientific sessions will highlight further emerging themes and provide new evidence in established themes, three of which will be featured in press releases issued during the congress:

- On the impact of heavy work on cardiovascular risk
- On pollution and air particle composition
- On the relative risks of smoking cessation and weight gain

While such presentations will be among the scientific highlights of EuroPREvent 2013 for the press, Professor Gielen sees the congress as a forum for primary care physicians, politicians, and nurses – as well as cardiologists and young researchers. Three out of five of the world's most costly diseases are cardiovascular in nature, and their prevention is now recognised as an urgent public health need.

More information: Further details of EuroPREvent 2013 can be found at [www.escardio.org/congresses/eu ... 3/Pages/welcome.aspx](http://www.escardio.org/congresses/eu...3/Pages/welcome.aspx)

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