

# Africa

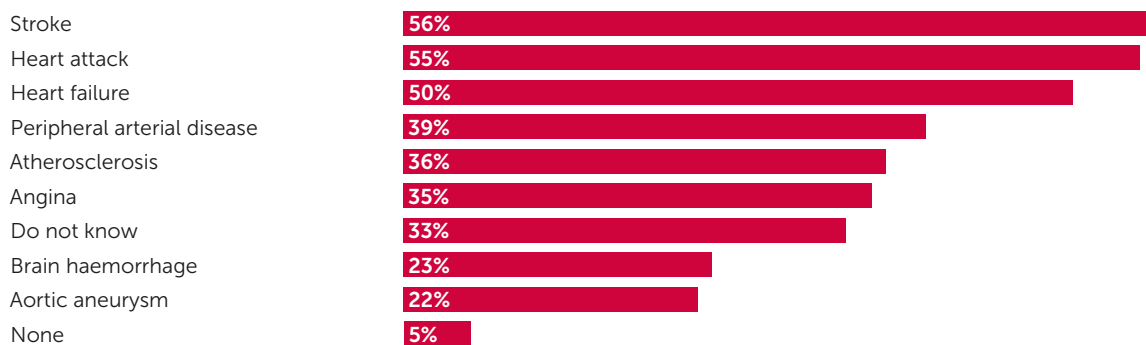
## Participant characteristics

Of the 183 respondents from IDF's Africa Region, 54% were women. A majority of those who completed the questionnaire (55%) were aged under 60, and 15% were under 40. Over a third (38%) had been living with diabetes for more than nine years. A similar proportion (31%) had been living with diabetes for fewer than three years, while 14% had had the condition for three to six years. The majority (58%) had tertiary level education, 21% had secondary level education and 16% had primary school education.

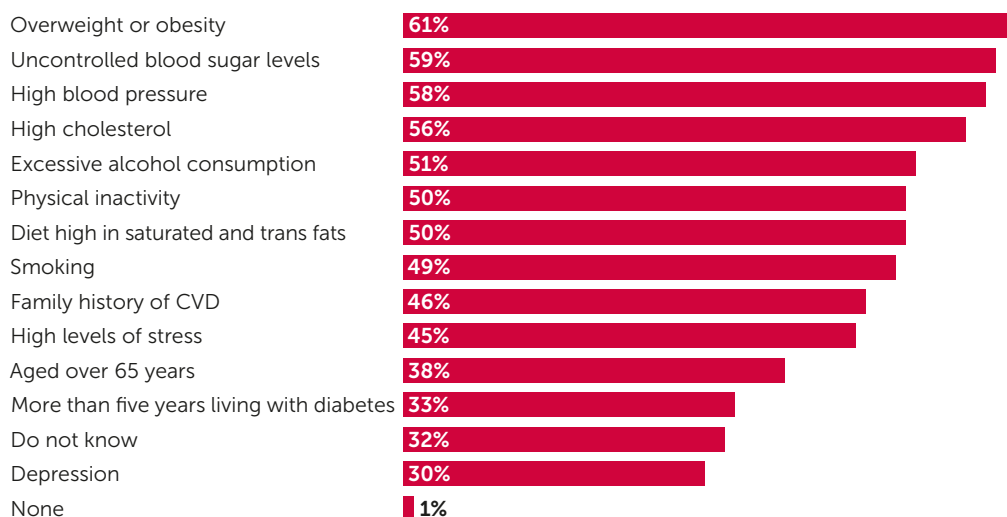
## Knowledge of CVD and risk factors

Respondents had a good knowledge of what constituted CVD, with more than half identifying stroke (56%), heart attack (55%) and/or heart failure (50%) as types of CVD. A smaller proportion listed peripheral arterial disease (39%), atherosclerosis (36%), and angina (35%). Fewer mentioned brain haemorrhage (23%) and aortic aneurysm (22%) as CVD events. Overall, more than 60% correctly identified at least one type of CVD (Figure 13).

**Figure 13: Knowledge of CVD – AFR**



**Figure 14: Knowledge of CVD risk factors – AFR**



Being overweight or obese was selected as a risk factor by 61%, with more than half identifying high blood pressure (58%), high cholesterol (56%), physical inactivity (50%), and smoking (49%) as risk factors. Additionally, many people recognised that uncontrolled blood sugar levels (59%) and a diet containing high amounts of saturated and trans fats (50%) contributed to CVD risk. Non-modifiable risk factors such as family history of CVD (46%); having lived with T2D for more than five years (33%); and being over 65 (38%) also resonated with respondents. Furthermore, they were aware that high levels of stress (45%), excessive alcohol consumption (51%) and depression (30%) all contribute to the risk of developing CVD (Figure 14).

## Awareness of CVD and risk factors

When asked about their self-rated risk of CVD, the majority (63%) of respondents considered themselves at either low or no risk. Thirty percent characterised themselves as being either somewhat at risk or at moderate risk. Seven percent rated themselves at high risk of CVD (Figure 15).

When asked what CVD risk factors they had, participants most often noted lifestyle-related factors. Physical inactivity and high levels of stress were both identified by 33% of respondents, followed by high blood pressure (32%) and being overweight or obese (32%). A family history of CVD was identified as a risk factor by 30% of participants. Maintaining healthy blood sugar levels was a challenge for 28%, with 25% citing a failure to maintain a healthy cholesterol level as a risk. Twenty-two percent noted that their diet contained high amounts of saturated and trans fats. A further 19% said they had experienced depression, while 16% smoked and 15% consumed alcohol excessively. Of those who responded, 47% stated they had not experienced a CVD event, or were not sure if they had. Stroke and heart failure were the most frequently mentioned CVD event experienced by 5% of the participants for each.

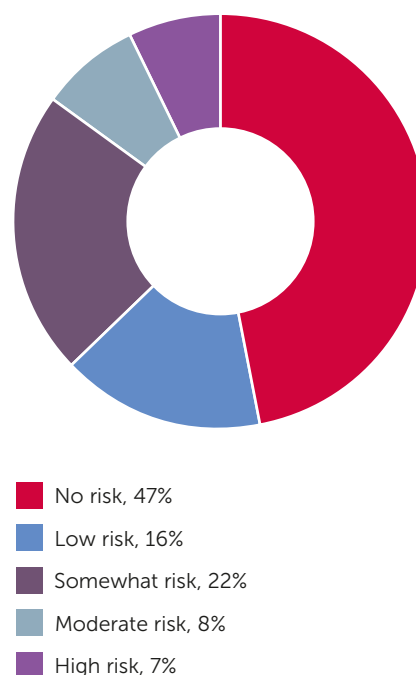
## Education about CVD

When asked if they had previously talked about diabetes and CVD risk factors with a health professional, 52% reported that they had either not done so, or were not sure if they had. Only 6% said they had had several conversations about CVD risk factors. Of those who had spoken with a health professional, 6% had discussed risk factors prior to their diabetes diagnosis; 14% had had the conversation at the time of their diabetes diagnosis; and 15% had done so soon after. Two percent first spoke with a health professional about diabetes and CVD risk factors at the time of their CVD diagnosis, or soon after.

Asked when they had last spoken to a health professional about CVD risk factors, 14% said this had been within the previous six months, while 22% reported that it had been more than six months previously. Fifty-two percent reported that they had never had a conversation with a health professional about CVD risk factors, or were not sure if they had.

Only 38% of respondents recognised that having diabetes increased their CVD risk even if they took their medication as prescribed. By contrast, 92% were aware that a healthy diet and physical exercise could lower their CVD risk. Twenty percent noted that they were too young to be concerned about

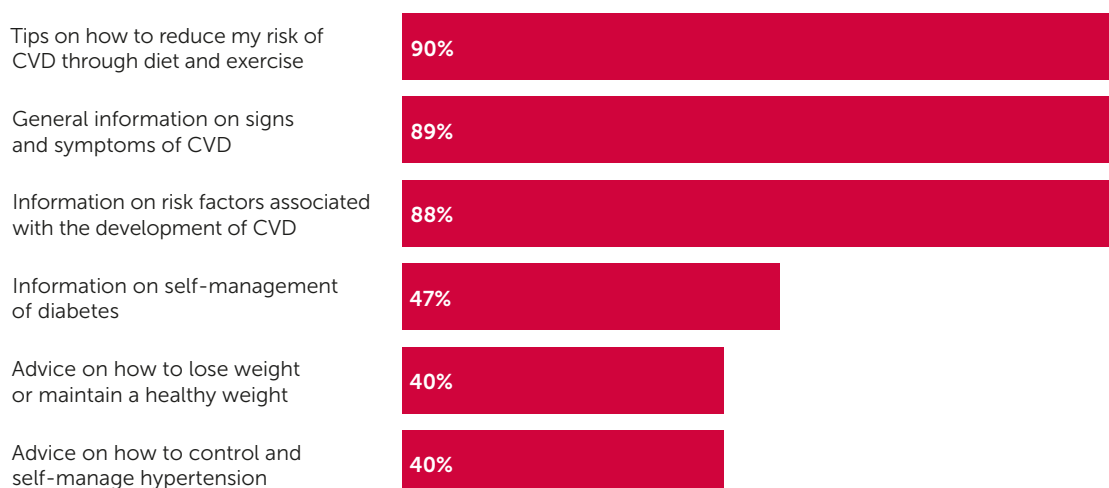
**Figure 15: Self-evaluation of CVD risk – AFR**



CVD. Recognising that CVD risk is often lifestyle driven, 64% stated that there were steps they could take to reduce it. Seventy-one percent appreciated that people of all weights can be at risk of CVD. The link between stress and CVD was noted by 68%.

When asked what information they needed to better understand the risks associated with type 2 diabetes and CVD, 90% said tips on risk reduction relating to diet and exercise would be useful. A similar figure (89%) wanted general information on CVD, while 88% were interested in education on risk factors. Information on diabetes self-management was considered useful by 47% (Figure 16).

**Figure 16: Information needed to better understand the risks associated with T2D and CVD in order to reduce them – AFR**



## Information about CVD

A majority of people (82%) relied on a health professional for information about CVD, followed by information on display at their clinic (61%). Fifty-two percent used information provided by patient organisations, while 34% relied on digital sources. Scientific journals were a valued source of information for 7%. Collectively, family, friends, and other caregivers were named as sources of information about CVD by 9% of participants.

Information about CVD provided a health professional was associated with the highest rates of satisfaction among those surveyed (61%), with information displayed at clinics also widely considered helpful (58%). Most people (58%) were also very satisfied with scientific patient organisations as a source of reliable CVD information. A smaller number (26%) felt satisfied with the digital options available to them. Interestingly, respondents said they felt neutral towards printed material (33%), digital options (30%), and TV or radio programmes (25%). They were most dissatisfied with information from advertisements (54%), daily magazines (52%) and newspapers (41%) as sources of information on CVD.