

The health gap between rich and poor



The persistence of socioeconomic disparities in cardiovascular health: Trends from 2002 to 2013

	High-income Americans		Lowest-income Americans	
	2002/2003	2012/2013	2002/2003	2012/2013
Obesity	22.4%	26.5%	29.6%	34.1%
Diabetes	5.6%	8.3%	9.6%	12.8%
High blood pressure	24.2%	33.3%	28.5%	36.3%
Physical inactivity	39.9%	47.4%	32.4%	55.4%
Smoking	16.2%	10.8%	32.2%	28.0%

- Data from **more than 250,000** U.S. adult participants in the nationwide **Medical Expenditure Panel Survey**.
- **Conclusion:** "Our findings highlight **low socioeconomic status as a persistent determinant of cardiovascular health**. We found that the **socioeconomic gaps** in the burden of **cardiovascular risk factors** have increased over a 12-year period and remain an **unmet public health priority**."

Source: "[Persistent socioeconomic disparities in cardiovascular risk factors and health in the United States: Medical Expenditure Panel Survey 2002-2013](#)," *Atherosclerosis*, online Dec. 8, 2017. Study included Dr. Salim Virani at the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center. Infographic by VA Research Communications, February 2018. Photo: © iStock/montArrr