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Global health risks: mortality and burden of disease attributable to selected major risks provides a comprehensive assessment of the mortality and burden of disease attributable to 24 global risk factors. This second volume complements *The global burden of disease: 2004 update* which summarized the mortality and burden of disease attributable to 135 disease and injury causes. Understanding the risks to health in different parts of the world is key to preventing disease and injuries. Consistent and comparative analysis of the available information on risks to health facilitates comparisons of the relative importance of health risks across different populations globally and assessment of the potential gains from public health interventions to reduce health risks.

This publication draws on the extensive databases of the World Health Organization, scientific studies, and information provided by Member States for both exposure data and the causal associations of risk exposure to disease and injury outcomes. It applies these updated risk analyses to the latest regional estimates of mortality and disease burden for a comprehensive set of diseases and injuries for the year 2004 by age and sex for the world, for regions of the world, and for countries grouped by average income per capita. This volume updates the previous assessments for the year 2000 published in *The world health report 2002*.

This publication is part of ongoing efforts by WHO to monitor and analyse the global health situation and its trends and to foster increased comparability of data between countries. It builds upon the work of technical programmes within WHO at country, regional and global levels, as well as collaboration with UN agencies, the private sector and academic institutions.

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