

Abstract: Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is the leading cause of on-duty death among firefighters (18% of on-duty fatalities) and a major cause of morbidity

as well as CVD in the fire service. CVD also has adverse public safety implications as well as significant cost implications for fire departments.

Approximately 10% of CVD among firefighters has been attributed to occupational factors. This review examines the occupational factors that contribute to CVD among firefighters and discusses strategies to reduce the risk of CVD among firefighters.

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is the leading cause of on-duty death among firefighters (18% of on-duty fatalities) and a major cause of morbidity among firefighters. CVD is also a leading cause of disability among firefighters. CVD in the fire service has adverse public safety implications as well as significant cost implications for fire departments. The purpose of this review is to examine the occupational factors that contribute to CVD among firefighters and discuss strategies to reduce the risk of CVD among firefighters.

Firefighters are at a higher risk of CVD than the general population. They are more likely to be overweight, have higher blood pressure, and are overwhelmed with non-fire related duties. CVD is more frequent at certain times of day, certain periods of the year, and is more frequent during strenuous duties compared to non-fire related situations. Moreover, as expected on-duty CVD events occur almost exclusively among firefighters.

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