



Tervise Arengu Instituut
National Institute for Health Development

**We create
health and
well-being**



The NIHD – a research and development institution

The National Institute for Health Development (NIHD) is a governmental public health agency that conducts research on public health and manages national health promotion and disease prevention programmes.

We collect and analyse Estonian health statistics and manage seven population-based health registries and databases.

Our main tasks include:

- monitoring trends in population health,
- collecting, analysing and disseminating national health statistics,
- monitoring and evaluating national health promotion and prevention programmes,
- promoting health and social well-being,
- developing health interventions and health promotion programmes,
- organising health and social services and conducting training courses,
- advising and influencing policy makers in the field of health.



We collaborate with many national and international research institutions and universities.

OUR MISSION:

to establish and share health-related knowledge and to influence health behaviour and health determiners, in order to increase the well-being of the people of Estonia and help them live longer and healthier lives.

OUR VALUES:

- cooperation
- competence, commitment and determination
- openness and creativity
- respect and tolerance



15% of NIHD employees hold a doctoral degree, and 51% hold a master's degree.

Research centre

The National Institute for Health Development conducts research on behalf of the government, for international programmes and on its own initiative.

As part of our research, we:

- conduct regular nationwide and population-based studies on the health-related behaviour of children, young people and adults,
- integrate various biomarkers into epidemiological sample surveys with the help of our well-equipped molecular biology, immunology and virology laboratories,
- develop theoretical grounds for medical science,
- publish research papers in professional publications,
- disseminate research results,
- participate in training programmes for researchers,
- monitor the implementation of health strategies and programmes, develop indicators, and evaluate the effectiveness of such activities.





Some of our most significant studies in recent years:

- Health inequalities, life-course health development, and social and individual determinants of population health
- Cancer epidemiology: incidence, prevalence and survival in Estonia and the possibilities of cancer control
- Zoonotic diseases and hepatotropic infections in Estonia: natural reservoirs, ways of spreading and characterisation of strains
- Science and technology in childhood obesity policy (STOP)
- Familial aggregation, gene-environment interactions, dietary habits and longitudinal changes of risk factors of chronic diseases and determinants of risky health behavior

NIHD employees published
scientific publications in 2017.

73

Prevention of health risks

Alcohol

Estonia has one of the highest alcohol consumption rates in Europe, which causes direct economic, social and health disadvantages. To reduce these disadvantages and make our living environment safer for everyone, we:

- educate people on the impact of alcohol on health and society,
- develop healthcare services for the early detection of alcohol abuse and better access to treatment (through the programme “Kainem ja tervem Eesti” (“A sober and healthier Estonia”) funded by the European Social Fund),
- train healthcare professionals and other specialists who work with people suffering from alcohol dependency, and prepare guidelines and information materials.

Tobacco

The prevalence of smoking among the adult Estonian population is approximately 20%. We conduct campaigns aimed at preventing tobacco use and promoting smoking cessation, work to improve counselling services for stopping smoking, and advise employers in the creation of a tobacco-free environment.

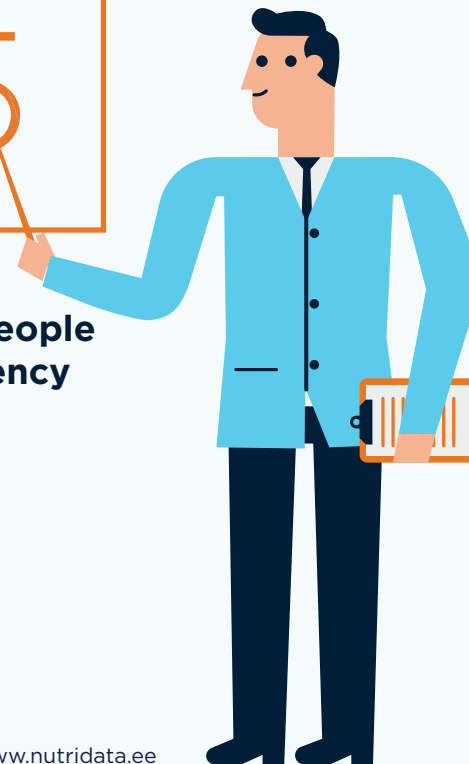
Nutrition and physical activity

Excess weight among both adults and children is a growing problem in Estonia. Our activities in the field of nutrition are directed at promoting a balanced diet. We develop and publish evidence-based nutrition and physical activity recommendations, deliver awareness campaigns, develop programmes for the licensing of professional nutrition advisors, and manage the nutritional database nutridata.ee.



2185

In 2016–2017, 2,185 people with alcohol dependency received help via the programme “Kainem ja tervem Eesti”.



Prevention of drug addiction and infectious diseases

HIV

Unfortunately, Estonia ranks first among the EU member states in terms of new cases of HIV infections. However, this number has decreased by almost two-thirds in the last decade and continues to drop.

To reduce the spread of HIV, we:

- help intravenous drug users cope with their addiction by providing harm reduction services, including syringe exchange programmes and counselling,
- develop accessible and convenient diagnostic and treatment services for sexually transmitted infections among highly vulnerable populations (people involved in prostitution, intravenous drug users),
- offer free and anonymous HIV testing and counselling,
- support people with HIV as well as their friends and families through counselling and case management.

Drug addiction

According to various estimates, there are approximately 9,000 intravenous drug users in Estonia.

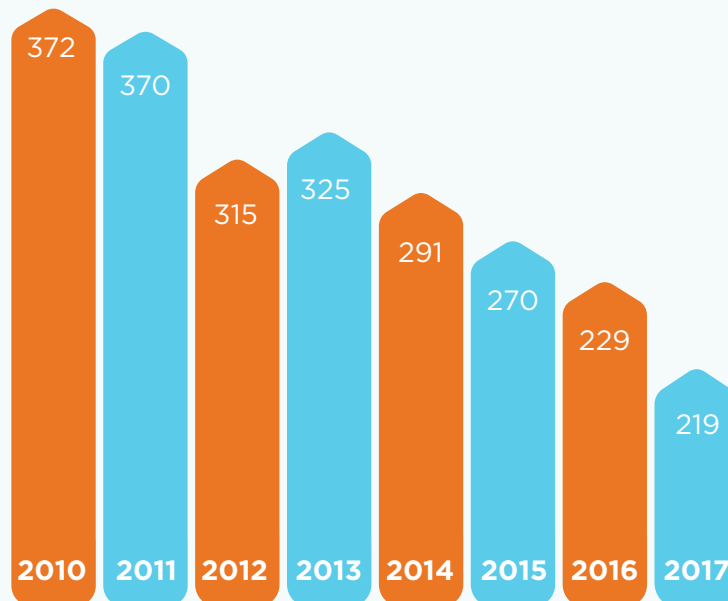
We believe that everyone deserves help and support, regardless of their reasons for using drugs. We coordinate the development and provision of a range of treatment, counselling and rehabilitation services for drug users, including opioid substitution treatment. Harm reduction centres offer a variety of counselling services and syringe exchange programmes. The distribution of naloxone, a life-saving drug to combat opioid overdose, has been launched, and training courses on how to use it are provided for drug users and their families, to ensure that help is always as close as possible.

Tuberculosis

Since 2000, tuberculosis cases in Estonia have decreased by more than threefold.

Within the framework of tuberculosis prevention, all TB patients undergoing outpatient treatment are provided with directly observed therapy and social support.

New diagnosed HIV cases



219

people were diagnosed with HIV in 2017.
In total, HIV has been diagnosed in 9,711 people in Estonia,
including 514 cases of AIDS.

Health and welfare promotion

We promote health among people of all ages. Our main focus is on families and parental education, with our activities aimed at improving the well-being of people and shaping a supportive mental, social and physical environment.

In promoting health and welfare, we follow international principles.



- We cooperate with educational institutions, employers and local specialists, including networks of kindergartens, schools and workplaces involved in health promotion.
- We develop and distribute sector-specific guidelines, methodologies and manuals.
- We offer training on health and well-being, nutrition and physical activity, alcohol, tobacco and drug prevention, sexual education, mental health and other topics.
- We develop training programmes for potential and existing foster families and other providers of substitute care services, as well as child protection professionals in local government.
- We collect and share experiences and good practices in all our fields of activity.

Evidence-based programmes

PAX Good Behaviour Game – a universal intervention programme used in classrooms to create a nurturing environment conducive to learning, develop prosocial skills, and prevent the development of risky behaviour.

The Incredible Years – a training programme for adults, helping them to acquire skills to handle behavioural problems in children and reduce parental stress.

42%

of kindergartens and schools
belong to the European
Network of Health
Promoting Schools.

Health statistics and registries

Health statistics

We collect and analyse health and healthcare statistics – from population health status and health behaviour to the use of healthcare resources. Our work is in line with international approaches, and the statistics we produce are impartial, reliable, relevant, confidential and transparent. We are the responsible agency for the regular submission of Estonian health and healthcare statistics to international organisations. Our statistics form the basis for research, prevention programmes and policy decisions.

The most viewed topics in the NIHD health statistics database in 2017:

1. Morbidity
2. Health and health behaviour
3. Population



20 731
times

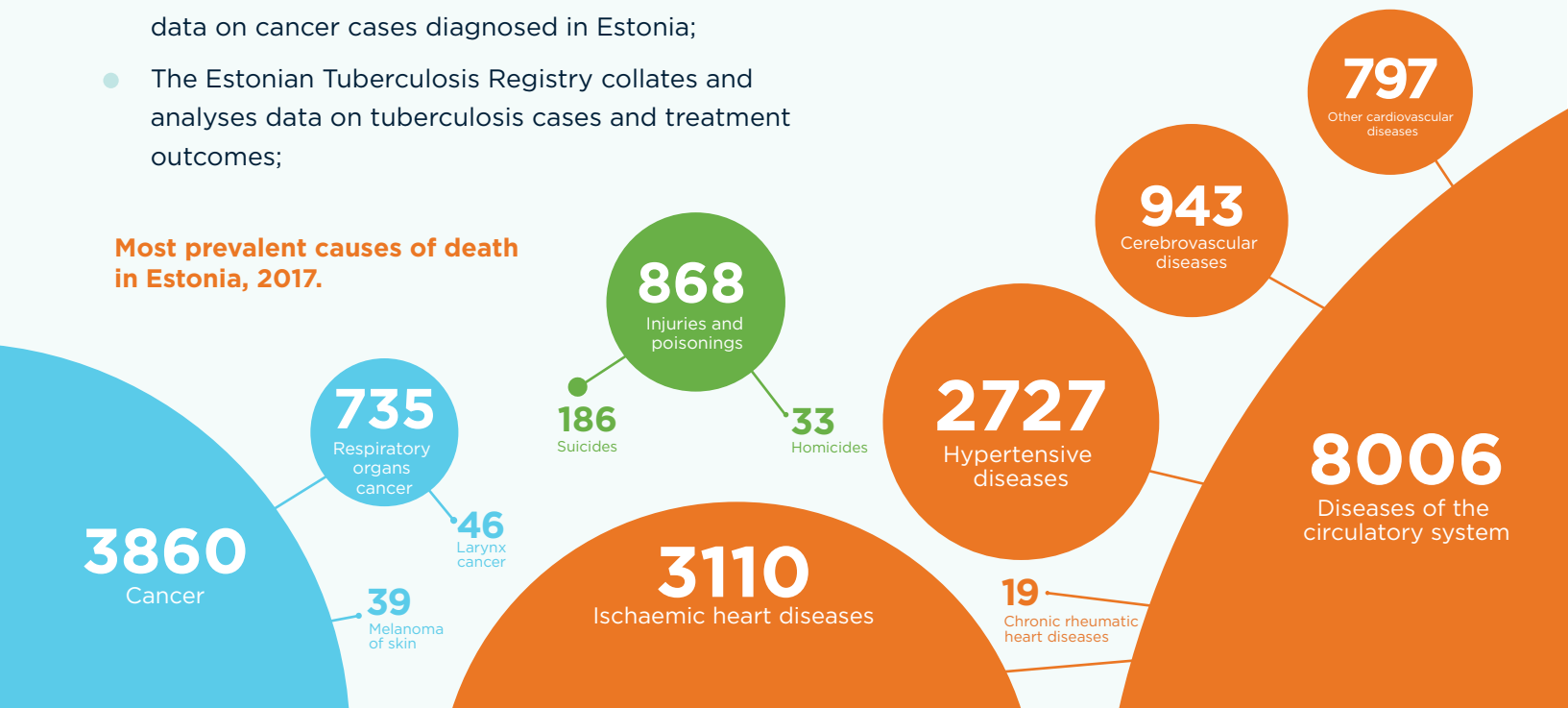
the NIHD health statistics database was used in 2017.

Registries

National statistical data related to health and medicine is collated, processed and distributed by seven medical registries and databases:

- The Estonian Medical Birth Registry and the Estonian Abortion Registry collate data on all births and abortions in Estonia;
- The Estonian Causes of Death Registry collates data on all cases of deaths registered on Estonian territory and in Estonian foreign missions;
- The Estonian Cancer Registry collates and analyses data on cancer cases diagnosed in Estonia;
- The Estonian Tuberculosis Registry collates and analyses data on tuberculosis cases and treatment outcomes;
- The Estonian Drug Treatment Database collates data on people who have started drug addiction treatment;
- The Estonian Cancer Screening Registry collates and analyses data gathered from breast, cervical and colorectal cancer screening programmes.

Most prevalent causes of death in Estonia, 2017.



Health marketing and training

Health marketing

Changing people's behaviours and habits is a lengthy process, which is why we support our goals with social campaigns. We provide reliable health information and advice on our websites. For example, we encourage people to eat at least five portions of fruit and vegetables every day. We remind people of the importance of using a condom to prevent HIV, help individuals take steps towards reducing alcohol consumption, and assist parents in developing their parental skills.

Our social campaigns are effective and visible, and we have won several prizes for our work.



Training

The NIHD Training Centre supports national health and social policies by providing professional development opportunities for specialists already working in the field. To this end, we develop and implement a variety of health and social

training programmes and organise information events, supervision, and national and international conferences. Our training courses are free of charge. To support the professional development of specialists in the field of social studies, we publish the journal Sotsiaaltöö (Social Work).

4200

In 2017,
people completed a professional
development course organised by NIHD.

