



**INTERNATIONAL  
ATHEROSCLEROSIS  
SOCIETY**

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**Global Call To Action on Familial Hypercholesterolemia Aims to Improve Diagnosis and Treatment Worldwide**

*The INTERNATIONAL ATHEROSCLEROSIS SOCIETY collaborates with FH Foundation, World Heart Federation and International Coalition to Highlight Unmet Need and Recommendations to Prevent Widespread Premature Cardiovascular Disease*

Milan, Italy - January 2, 2020 -- The International Atherosclerosis Society together with the FH Foundation and the World Heart Federation announced today the publication of a Global Call to Action on familial hypercholesterolemia (FH), a vastly under-recognized and poorly managed public health concern, in *JAMA Cardiology*. Authored by a global panel of scientific experts, advocacy leaders, public health officials, advocacy leaders and individuals with FH from 40 countries, the report notes glaring gaps in screening and guideline-based care for FH, the most common cause of early and aggressive heart disease.

FH is an inherited metabolic disorder found in all races and ethnicities and impacts 34 million people worldwide. FH causes high LDL-cholesterol from birth and should be diagnosed and treated within the first two decades of life. Left untreated, individuals with FH have a 20-times higher risk of illness and death from cardiovascular disease (CVD). However, if diagnosed and treated, heart attacks, strokes and the need for surgery can be prevented.

The International Atherosclerosis Society participated in an international coalition convened by the FH Foundation and World Heart Federation to reexamine and update key recommendations issued by the World Health Organization (WHO) in their Report on Familial Hypercholesterolemia in 1998. In the more than 20 years since that report, few of these recommendations have been systematically implemented on a country-by-country basis, leaving nine out of 10 people born with FH undiagnosed.

“The International Atherosclerosis Society is highly committed with the cause of Familial Hypercholesterolemia and is an active member together with all our 67 member societies, the FH Foundation, Ibero-American FH network and other stakeholders on the FH Global Call to Action” said prof Raul Santos, President of the IAS and Director Lipid Clinic Heart Institute (InCor) University of Sao Paulo Medical School Hospital, Sao Paulo-Brazil.

“Familial hypercholesterolemia represents an unprecedented opportunity for prevention of heart disease, which remains the number one cause of morbidity and mortality in most of the world,” said Katherine Wilemon, Founder and CEO of the FH Foundation. “Our aim with this Call to Action is to highlight that we have had the scientific understanding, and effective therapies, to stop inherited coronary heart disease, but have allowed generations of families to go uncared for. It is time to address Familial Hypercholesterolemia as a public health priority.”

The FH Global Call to Action coalition cites mounting scientific data, the commercialization of novel therapies, and technological advances as further impetus for public health officials and governments to commit to early screening and coordinated lifetime care for this large and vulnerable population.

“The success of the concrete and actionable recommendations we issue today will depend on support from governments, which is why we are jointly addressing them as a global community now,” said Jean-Luc Eiselé, CEO of the World Heart Federation. “Each of the partnering organizations are committed to advocating to improve and expand FH care in their countries. The Global Call to Action on FH is an unprecedented opportunity to prevent premature cardiovascular disease in future generations worldwide.”

Participating organizations include: Ailevi Hiperkolesterolemi Derneği (Turkish Association of Familial Hypercholesterolemia), Associação Brasileira de Hipercolesterolemia Familiar, Asociación Mexicana de Hipercolesterolemia, Familiar Association Nationale des Hypercholestérolémies Familiales (Anhet.f), Associazione Nazionale Ipercholersterolemia Familiare (ANIF), Belchol, Cholesterol & Co e.V (CholCO e.V), Diagnóza FH, European Atherosclerosis Society, European Society of Cardiology, FHchol Austria, FH Australasia Network, FH Canada Network, FH Europe, FH Foundation, FH IberoAmericana Network, FH Mexico, FH Sverige, Fundación Hipercolesterolemia, Familiar Fundația pentru Ocrotirea Bolnavilor cu Afectuni Cardiovasculare (FOBAC), GIP-FH Harteraad, Heart UK, International Atherosclerosis Society, Italian Association of Inherited Dyslipidemias (A.I.D.E), LDL Greece Lipid Association of India, National Lipid Association, Pacientes de Corazón, ParSirdi.lv Patient Society, Preventive Cardiovascular Nurses Association, SZIVSN (FH Hungary Patient Association) and the World Heart Federation.

Here is the direct link to the paper:

[https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamacardiology/fullarticle/10.1001/jamacardio.2019.5173?guestAccessKey=b6ee57bf-29e2-452a-a6ef-79e4055da8c0&utm\\_source=For\\_The\\_Media&utm\\_medium=referral&utm\\_campaign=ftm\\_links&utm\\_content=tf1&utm\\_term=010220](https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamacardiology/fullarticle/10.1001/jamacardio.2019.5173?guestAccessKey=b6ee57bf-29e2-452a-a6ef-79e4055da8c0&utm_source=For_The_Media&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=ftm_links&utm_content=tf1&utm_term=010220)

### **About the International Atherosclerosis Society**

The International Atherosclerosis Society (IAS) is a federation of member organizations worldwide (67 in 57 countries) whose basic missions are to promote the scientific knowledge and understanding of the etiology, prevention, and treatment of atherosclerosis. The IAS exists to coordinate globally the exchange of scientific information among the medical world, to foster research and education on cardio-metabolic-cerebrovascular diseases and thrombosis risk factors, and to help translate this knowledge into improving the effectiveness of programs of public health designed to prevent and treat these diseases.

IAS has four Regional Federations: Europe; the Americas; Asia-Pacific, and Middle East and Africa. Please visit [www.athero.org](http://www.athero.org) for more information.

### **About the FH Foundation**

The FH Foundation is a leading research and advocacy non-profit organization focused on reducing heart disease by driving the scientific understanding and evidence-based care of FH. The mission of the FH Foundation is to save lives by serving families living with FH and contributing to scientific research that leads to greater understanding and improved diagnosis and treatment of FH worldwide. Please visit [www.TheFHFoundation.org](http://www.TheFHFoundation.org) for more information.

### **About the World Heart Federation**

The World Heart Federation is dedicated to leading the global fight against CVD, including heart disease and stroke. We are the only global advocacy and leadership organization bringing together the entire CVD community to drive the CVD agenda and help people live longer, better, more heart-healthy lives. We and our Members – more than 200 organizations, scientific societies, foundations, and patient associations in over 100 countries – believe in a world where heart health for everyone is a fundamental human right and a crucial element of global health justice. Please visit [www.worldheartfederation.org](http://www.worldheartfederation.org) for more information.