

High blood pressure and heart disease continue to pose serious health risks in Rwanda, according to the Rwanda Biomedical Center (RBC).

RBC reports that 16.8% of Rwandans aged 18–69 were diagnosed with high blood pressure in 2022. Cardiovascular conditions accounted for 47.7% of hospital deaths, while heart-related issues contributed to 59.3% of deaths nationwide.

Ahead of the International Day for the Prevention of Heart Disease on Sept. 29, RBC this Sunday conducted screenings and awareness activities in Rubavu. During the campaign, 1,119 residents were tested, revealing that 40% had high blood pressure, 7.5% had heart disease, and 5% had elevated blood sugar levels.

Dr. Evariste Ntaganda the head of the cardiovascular diseases department at RBC, emphasized that many people carry these conditions without knowing it, often discovering them only after complications develop. He urged early health checkups and strict adherence to medical guidance.

“High blood pressure often goes undetected. Symptoms such as chest pain, headaches, kidney issues, or vision changes usually appear only when other organs are affected,” Dr. Ntaganda said.

Health experts recommend monitoring intake of salt, sugar, and fats, maintaining a healthy weight, and engaging in regular physical activity to reduce the risk of non-communicable diseases.

Rwanda observes the International Day for Heart Disease annually on Sept. 29, while local campaigns, including screenings and awareness activities, were conducted across districts in advance of the official day.