Heart Failure Prediction Project

# Introduction

The purpose of this project is to explore and analyze heart failure data to develop and evaluate machine learning models capable of delivering accurate predictions.

The first section of the project will focus on data preparation and exploratory data analysis (EDA), starting with a concise explanation of the dataset and its variables. The second section will involve fitting three different machine learning models — Logistic Regression, SVM, and Random Forest — and optimizing them to identify variants capable of delivering the most accurate predictions.

Finally, all models will be compared to determine which type performs best, not only in terms of prediction accuracy but also in interpretability and overall stability.

# Exploratory Data Analysis (EDA)

## Data description

The dataset analyzed in this project focuses on heart failure, specifically on determining whether a patient has heart disease based on various demographic characteristics and biomarkers. The dataset, originally titled *Heart Failure Prediction*, was sourced from *Kaggle*[[1]](#footnote-1).

According to *World Health Organization*, the cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) are the leading cause of death globally, representing 32% of all global deaths in 2019 – nearly 85% of those were due to a heart attack, or a stroke. There are many different variants of cardiovascular diseases, however nearly all of them are manageable if detected early. There are many proven behavioral (i.e.: unhealthy diet) and environmental (i.e.: air pollution) risk factors, which effects influence biomarkers, such as blood pressure. Those immediate risk factors can be measured in healthcare facilities, and thus it is possible to predict whether certain individual is in danger of developing a heart disease[[2]](#footnote-2).

There have been many attempts to model risks of developing a heart disease, with the notable one being the sex-specified algorithm - *Framingham Risk Score*. Its’ basic form is used to estimate the 10-year risk of developing a CVDs[[3]](#footnote-3).

## Data structure

This dataset was created by combining different datasets already available independently but not combined before – thus resulting in 918 observations of one outcome column (heart disease) and 11 predictors. To achieve a didactic purpose, the **original dataset has been modified to slightly imbalance the data**.

The variables included in the dataset are as follows:

* *HeartDisease* [binary] – outcome column,
* *Age* [years],
* *Sex* [M/F],
* *RestingBP* [mm/Hg] – resting blood pressure,
  + High values suggest hypertension, a significant risk factor for heart disease.
* *Cholesterol* [mm/dl] - serum cholesterol,
  + Elevated cholesterol, particularly LDL ("bad" cholesterol), is associated with atherosclerosis and heart disease.
* *MaxHR* [beats/min] - maximum heart rate achieved,
  + A lower-than-expected maximum heart rate may indicate impaired cardiac function.
* *FastingBS* [binary, if > 120 mg/dl: 1] - fasting blood sugar,
  + A fasting blood sugar level above 120 mg/dl is indicative of hyperglycemia, a marker of diabetes or insulin resistance, which increases cardiovascular risk.
* *ChestPainType* [TA, ATA, NAP, ASY] - chest pain type,
  + TA (Typical Angina): Chest pain triggered by exertion, relieved by rest,
  + ATA (Atypical Angina): Less predictable or associated with other factors,
  + NAP (Non-Anginal Pain): Chest pain unrelated to heart disease,
  + ASY (Asymptomatic): No chest pain, common in silent ischemia[[4]](#footnote-4).
* *ExerciseAngina* [Y/N] - exercise-induced angina,
* *RestingECG* [Normal, ST, LVH] - resting electrocardiogram results,
  + Normal: No abnormalities detected,
  + ST: Indicates ST-T wave abnormalities, a sign of ischemia or previous heart attack,
  + LVH: Suggests left ventricular hypertrophy, a thickened heart muscle wall often due to chronic hypertension.
* *Oldpeak* - ST depression on the ECG during stress tests,
  + Indicates the severity of ischemia; higher values suggest worse outcomes.
* *ST\_Slope* [Up, Flat, Down] - the slope of the peak exercise ST segment.
  + Flat and Down indicates ischemia.

1. *Heart Failure Prediction Dataset*, Kaggle, <https://www.kaggle.com/datasets/fedesoriano/heart-failure-prediction?select=heart.csv> [06.12.2024] [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. *Cardiovascular Diseases (CVDs)*, WHO, <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/cardiovascular-diseases-(cvds)> [06.12.2024] [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. *Framingham Risk Score*, Wikipedia, <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Framingham_Risk_Score> [06.12.2024] [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Ischemia here refers to cardiac ischemia, which is an insufficient blood flow to the heart muscle, often leading to chest pain (angina) or a heart attack. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)