A Data-Driven Approach to Heart Attack Risk Prediction Using Machine Learning Algorithms

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Abstract: Heart disease is a significant cause of global mortality, with heart attacks being a critical concern in public health. Early prediction of heart attack risk allows for timely intervention and preventive measures, potentially reducing fatality rates. This study investigates the application of machine learning (ML) techniques to predict heart attack risk using patient medical records and lifestyle data. We collect and preprocess data from various sources, including demographic and medical attributes like age, cholesterol levels, blood pressure, and more. Several ML models are trained and evaluated for their prediction capabilities. The models are assessed using performance metrics such as accuracy, precision, recall, and AUC-ROC. Our results demonstrate that machine learning can provide accurate predictions of heart attack risk, highlighting key features that contribute to the risk. This research emphasizes the potential of ML in healthcare for improving early diagnosis and promoting personalized preventive strategies.

Keywords: Heart attack prediction, machine learning, cardiovascular disease, predictive modeling, healthcare analytics,

I. INTRODUCTION

Heart disease, specifically coronary artery disease (CAD) leading to heart attacks, remains one of the most significant causes of mortality globally, claiming millions of lives each year. As lifestyles evolve with increasing urbanization, sedentary habits, stress, and unhealthy diets, the prevalence of heart-related conditions has seen a sharp rise. The complexity of heart disease, influenced by multiple risk factors such as age, gender, family history, hypertension, high cholesterol, diabetes, smoking, physical inactivity, and poor dietary habits, makes its early detection a crucial goal in medical science.

Historically, healthcare professionals have relied on traditional clinical methods and statistical tools to assess an individual's risk of heart attack. However, these approaches often fall short in providing accurate, individualized risk assessments, primarily because they fail to consider the intricate interplay of multiple risk factors simultaneously. This is where machine learning (ML) has emerged as a transformative technology, offering the potential to revolutionize

heart attack prediction by leveraging vast amounts of patient data to deliver more precise, data-driven insights. With the increasing availability of healthcare data from medical records, electronic health systems, and wearable devices, the role of ML in predictive analytics has become more prominent, allowing researchers and practitioners to explore its capacity to predict complex health outcomes such as heart attacks.

Machine learning, a subset of artificial intelligence, focuses on developing algorithms that can learn patterns from data and make predictions or decisions without explicit programming. These algorithms are trained on large datasets containing features or variables such as demographic information, medical history, and lifestyle habits, enabling them to predict outcomes like heart attack risk with increasing accuracy.

Various ML models, including supervised learning methods such as Logistic Regression, Decision Trees, Random Forests, and Gradient Boosting Machines (GBMs), as well as more complex approaches like Neural Networks, have been used in healthcare applications. Each model brings unique strengths to the predictive process, from simplicity and interpretability in the case of Logistic Regression to the ability to handle high-dimensional data and complex interactions in Neural Networks. Despite this variety, the central promise of ML models is their ability to improve upon traditional risk calculators by learning from a broader range of variables and uncovering patterns that may not be immediately apparent to human analysts. In the context of heart attack prediction, where the interaction between multiple risk factors is non-linear and highly individualized, the need for such advanced models is clear.

The ability to predict heart attack risk with higher precision has wide-reaching implications, both for individual patients and for the broader healthcare system. For patients, an accurate risk prediction can lead to earlier interventions, such as lifestyle changes,

medications, or even surgical procedures, that can significantly reduce the risk of a heart attack. From a healthcare perspective, machine learning offers the potential for better resource allocation, allowing for targeted interventions among high-risk populations and reducing unnecessary treatments for those at lower risk. Furthermore, by automating the risk prediction process, ML can help alleviate the burden on healthcare professionals, allowing them to focus on patient care rather than complex risk calculations. In this study, we explore the use of machine learning techniques to predict heart attack risk by analyzing patient attributes and medical data. The primary aim is to evaluate the performance of various ML models in predicting heart attack risk, thereby enhancing early detection and providing healthcare professionals with data-driven insights for more personalized patient care. We begin by collecting and preprocessing data from publicly available sources, ensuring that the dataset includes key variables associated with heart disease, such as age, cholesterol levels, blood pressure, smoking status, and physical activity. Preprocessing steps include handling missing values, normalizing or standardizing the data, and applying feature engineering to create new variables where necessary.

Exploratory Data Analysis (EDA) is then conducted to understand the distribution of variables, identify correlations, and gain insights into the underlying patterns within the data. Following data preparation, we move on to the model selection and training phase. Several machine learning models are trained on the dataset, starting with baseline models such as Logistic Regression and Decision Trees, which are often used in healthcare for their simplicity and interpretability. Logistic Regression, a widely-used linear model, provides a straightforward approach to understanding the relationship between various risk factors and the likelihood of a heart attack. Decision Trees, on the other hand, offer a more flexible approach, allowing for non-linear relationships between variables to be captured. These models serve as a starting point for comparison with more advanced techniques.

As the study progresses, we introduce more complex models like Random Forests, Gradient Boosting Machines (GBMs), and Neural Networks. Random Forests, an ensemble learning method, combine multiple decision trees to improve predictive accuracy and reduce overfitting, making them particularly useful in cases where there are many interacting features. GBMs, another ensemble method, focus on improving model performance by sequentially

building trees that correct the errors of the previous ones, thus achieving high accuracy in classification tasks. Neural Networks, inspired by the structure of the human brain, offer a more powerful approach to modeling complex relationships between variables, especially when large amounts of data are available.

However, these models also come with trade-offs in terms of interpretability and computational cost, as they require extensive training and tuning of hyperparameters to achieve optimal performance. Once the models are trained, they are evaluated using several performance metrics, including accuracy, precision, recall, F1 score, and the Area Under the Receiver Operating Characteristic Curve (AUC-ROC). Accuracy measures the proportion of correct predictions, while precision and recall provide insight into the model's ability to correctly identify positive cases (i.e., heart attacks) and avoid false negatives. The F1 score balances precision and recall, providing a single metric for comparing model performance, and the AUC-ROC curve evaluates the model's ability to discriminate between positive and negative cases across different thresholds. Cross-validation is also applied to ensure that the models are not overfitting the training data and can generalize well to new, unseen data.

One of the key challenges in this study is ensuring that the machine learning models are interpretable and actionable for healthcare professionals. While advanced models like Neural Networks can achieve high accuracy, their "black-box" nature often makes it difficult to understand how predictions are made. This lack of transparency can be a barrier to adoption in clinical settings, where explainability is crucial for building trust with healthcare providers. To address this, we explore methods for interpreting model outputs, such as feature importance scores, which highlight the most influential variables in predicting heart attack risk. This step is essential for providing healthcare professionals with the insights they need to make informed decisions based on the model's predictions. Another critical aspect of this research is the validation of the models in real-world settings. While machine learning models can perform well on historical data, their true value lies in their ability to predict future outcomes accurately. To ensure that the models are robust and reliable, we validate them on independent datasets that were not used during the training process. This validation step helps assess the generalizability of the models and ensures that they can be applied to diverse patient populations.

Additionally, we consider the ethical implications of using machine learning in healthcare, particularly in terms of data privacy, bias, and fairness.

Healthcare data is often sensitive and subject to strict regulations, such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) in the United States. Ensuring that patient data is handled securely and that the models do not introduce or perpetuate bias is a top priority. Bias in machine learning can arise when models are trained on non-representative datasets, leading to predictions that favor certain groups over others. In the context of heart attack prediction, this could mean that certain populations, such as women or minority groups, are underrepresented in the data, leading to inaccurate predictions for these individuals. To mitigate this risk, we apply techniques such as balanced sampling and fairness-aware learning to ensure that the models perform equitably across different demographic groups.

The ultimate goal of this research is to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on machine learning's role in healthcare and to provide a foundation for future work in heart attack prediction. By

demonstrating the effectiveness of ML models in predicting heart attack risk, this study aims to pave the way for more widespread adoption of predictive analytics in clinical settings.

With the integration of machine learning into healthcare systems, we envision a future where early detection and personalized treatment plans become the norm, ultimately improving patient outcomes and reducing the burden of heart disease on healthcare systems worldwide. In conclusion, the application of machine learning to heart attack risk prediction holds great promise for advancing personalized medicine and improving patient care. Through careful data collection, model training, and validation, this study demonstrates the potential of ML to enhance the accuracy and interpretability of risk predictions, offering valuable insights to healthcare providers.

As machine learning continues to evolve, its role in predicting complex health outcomes like heart attacks will only grow, providing new opportunities for early detection, intervention, and ultimately, the prevention of life-threatening events.

S.NO	TITLE	AUTHOR	SUMMARY	TECHNOLOGY USED	LIMITATION
1	Predicting Heart Disease	Smith et al.	Explores various ML	Logistic Regression,	Limited data
	Using Machine Learning		techniques for heart	Decision Trees, SVM	diversity, primarily
	Techniques		disease prediction and		focused on a single
	(2020)		compares their		demographic.
	(Conference)		performance.		
2	Heart Disease Prediction	Lee et al.	Uses deep learning	Neural Networks, Deep	Requires large
	with Deep Learning		models to improve heart	Learning	datasets for training,
	Techniques		prediction disease		computationally
	(2021)		accuracy.		intensive.
	(Journal)				
3	An Ensemble Approach	Kumar et al.	Proposes an ensemble	Random Forests.	Ensemble models can
	for Predicting		model combining	Gradient Boosting	complex be to
	Cardiovascular Disease		multiple classifiers to		interpret.
	(2019)		predict cardiovascular		
	(Journal)		disease.		
$\overline{4}$	Predictive Analytics for	Zhang et al.	predictive Discusses	Decision Trees, XGBoost	Limited external
	Heart Attack Risk		analytics methods for		validation, mainly
	Assessment Using		assessing heart attack		based on historical
	Machine Learning		risk and their		data.
	(2022)		effectiveness.		
	(Conference)				
5	Improving Heart Disease	Patel et al.	Focuses feature on	Feature Engineering,	May not generalize
	Prediction Accuracy with		engineering techniques	Logistic Regression	different well to
	Feature Engineering		to enhance heart disease		populations.
	(2020)		prediction accuracy.		
	(Journal)				
6	Comparative Study of	Singh et al.	Compares various ML	SVM, Naive Bayes, KNN	of Shortage
	Machine Learning		algorithms for heart		longitudinal studies
	Algorithms for Heart		attack prediction and		to validate results.
	Attack Prediction (2021)		provides performance		
	(Journal)		metrics.		

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

III. METHODOLOGY

Figure 1. Flowchart of Heart Attack Prediction Model

IV. DATA

The dataset for heart attack prediction is sourced from a publicly available healthcare database, containing detailed medical records and patient information. The columns include various patient attributes and medical measurements such as age, gender, cholesterol levels, resting blood pressure, blood sugar levels, electrocardiogram results, maximum heart rate, and other important factors like chest pain type, exerciseinduced angina, and previous medical history. These features play a crucial role in predicting the risk of heart attack using machine learning algorithms.

V. DATA PREPROCESSING

First off, there are missing, inconsistent, and noisy data in the statistics set. Preprocessing of data is essential to eliminate irrelevant information and

extract valuable insights. The application of statistical techniques enables the transformation of the data into a format that is appropriate for analysis and utilization. Statistics preprocessing has been concerned with the subsequent steps.: Data Cleaning, Data Reduction and Data Transformation.

Data Cleaning: It refers to the procedure for eliminating undesired information from a set of records, including erroneous data, redundant statistics, and unformatted facts. By eliminating these inaccuracies, we can enhance the accuracy of the results. The following actions were done even as the records were being cleaned:

● Remove Duplicates: The likelihood of duplicate entries in statistics is high when data is gathered from various sources. The results will be unclear if

there are duplicates. It would be better if we eliminated those duplicates.

- Remove Irrelevant Data: Performing evaluation on irrelevant statistics hampers the efficiency of the process as it does not yield any benefits. To illustrate, if our analysis solely requires attention to particulate matter, we must exclude various additives that are highly unrelated to our investigation in order to optimize time utilization.
- Handling Missing Values: The management of absent records can be approached by either deleting the complete collection of data or by adding the necessary values to the gaps. In case of absentee subjects, an estimated cost can be determined. If the missing values significantly impact the overall statistics, the tuple containing those values will be excluded.
- Clear Formatting: Data that has undergone extensive formatting cannot be processed by machine learning models, making it challenging to work with if our information is structured in a particular way.
- Convert Data Types: Textual representations of numbers are sometimes mistakenly inputted. Consequently, the numerical data takes the form of strings. Since they are in string format, it becomes impossible to carry out any mathematical calculations on them. Therefore, it becomes necessary to convert the string representations of the statistical figures in order to perform mathematical operations on them.

Data Transformation: The process of enhancing the visual appeal of data enables better decision-making based on data. This involves modifying the values, structure, or presentation of information. Techniques such as normalization, feature selection, discretization, and concept hierarchy generation are all integral to this process.

Data Reduction: Analysis gets harder when one is working with a lot of statistics. We use an information reduction technique to address this. Data reduction aims to reduce the costs associated with record evaluation and storage while boosting garage efficiency. In order to discount records, a number of steps were followed, including records cube aggregation, dimensionality reduction, numerosity discount, and attribute subset selection.

VI. TRAINING ANDF TESTING THE MODEL

1. LOGISTIC REGRESSION

One common type of regression technique is logistic regression. Regression techniques use it to make precise predictions. reduction trends. The average shrinkage of the parent material toward the center is called shrinkage. The lasso method works with sparse, basic patterns (like lesser models).

Calculate residual sum of squares:-

$$
RSS = \sum_{i=1}^{n} (y_i - f(x_i))^2 \qquad \qquad \dots (iii)
$$

Where:

 y_i = The ith Value Of The Variable To Be Predicted $f(x_i)$ = Predicted Value Of y_i

n = Upper Limit Of Summation

● Executes L1 Regularization, meaning it assigns a penalty equal to the absolute cost of the coefficients' importance.

RSS + α * (Total Of The Absolute Value Of Coefficients) = Minimization Objective \dots (iv)

- \bullet Similar to the ridge, α (alpha) in this instance offers a trade-off between balancing RSS and coefficient importance. Like the ridge, there is a range of values for α. Let's quickly restate it here:
	- 1. The coefficients in $\alpha = 0$ are the same as in simple linear regression.
	- 2. $\alpha = \infty$: Every coefficient is zero (no logic change)
	- 3. $0 \le \alpha \le \infty$: Coefficients Of Simple Linear Regression Between 0 And That

2. DECISION TREE REGRESSOR

The Decision Tree Regressor utilizes recursive binary splitting as a technique to produce predictions. This algorithm starts at the root node of the decision tree and works its way down to a leaf node. Next, to ascertain the target value for a particular instance, the value of the leaf node is utilized as the prediction. Typically, the mean of the target values within the leaf node serves as the prediction for a Decision Tree Regressor.

 The prediction made by a Decision Tree Regressor at a leaf node is determined by calculating the training data's mean of the target values samples that have reached that specific leaf node during the tree-building process. Mathematically, you can represent it as follows:

$$
\widehat{y}(x) = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^{N} y_i \qquad \qquad \dots (iv)
$$

Where,

- $y^{(x)}$ = predicted value for a new instance **x**.
- $N =$ number of training data samples that have reached the specific leaf node.
- y_i = target value of each of those training data samples.

 The Decision Tree Regressor essentially averages the target values of the data points that end up in the same leaf node, and this average becomes the predicted value for any new data point that follows the same path in the tree.

3. K-NEAREST NEIGHBOURS

It is an algorithm for supervised machine learning that is simple and efficient for solving classification and regression problems. It utilizes the similarity between a data point and its K nearest neighbors in the training dataset to make predictions. The formula for predicting a target value in the context of regression using KNN is as follows:

$$
\hat{y}(x) = \frac{1}{K} \sum_{i=1}^{K} y_i \qquad \qquad \dots (v)
$$

Where,

- 4. $y^{(x)}$ = predicted value for a new instance **x**.
- 5. $K =$ number of nearest neighbors to consider.
- 6. y_i = target value of the ith of the nearest neighbors datapoint.

4. RANDOM FOREST CLASSIFIER

A versatile machine learning ensemble algorithm that combines the predictions of several decision trees is called a Random Forest. It's widely used for classification and regression tasks. The process involves bootstrapping the training data (randomly selecting subsets with replacement), constructing individual decision trees, and aggregating their predictions. For classification, it tallies the votes from each tree to determine the final class prediction, while for regression, it computes the average of the individual tree predictions. By introducing randomness through feature selection and sampling, Random Forest mitigates overfitting, improves prediction accuracy, and provides a reliable tool for various ML applications.

5. SUPPORT VECTOR MACHINES

A versatile machine learning algorithm called Support Vector Machine (SVM) is commonly used for classification and regression tasks. SVM works by finding the optimal hyperplane that best separates the data into different classes. For classification, it seeks a hyperplane that maximizes the margin between the closest points (support vectors) from each class. In cases where the data is not linearly separable, SVM applies kernel functions to map the data into a higherdimensional space, where it can be separated more effectively. For regression (known as Support Vector Regression, SVR), SVM attempts to fit the best possible line within a certain threshold of error.

SVM is powerful because it focuses on the most critical data points (the support vectors) and is less influenced by outliers. This allows it to generalize well on unseen data, making it a robust tool in various machine learning applications, particularly for tasks that involve complex decision boundaries.

6. AUTO ML

AutoML (Automated Machine Learning) is a powerful approach that automates the machine learning workflow, including data preprocessing, model selection, and hyperparameter tuning, to optimize performance in classification and regression tasks. Unlike traditional algorithms like Random Forest, which rely on combining decision trees, AutoML tests multiple algorithms and ensembles to identify the best model. It automatically handles tasks like feature selection, model evaluation, and optimization, reducing the risk of overfitting while improving prediction accuracy. By simplifying the modelbuilding process, AutoML serves as a versatile tool for both beginners and experienced practitioners in various machine learning applications.

VII. PERFORMANCE METRICS

Machine learning models' accuracy and efficacy are primarily assessed using performance metrics. These metrics help measure the error or deviation between model predictions and actual results. Some of the performance measures used in Heart Attack measurement are:

Mean Absolute Error (MAE): The MAE is obtained by dividing the mathematical difference between the actual and predicted values. Another way to define it is by counting the number of errors in paired observations that represent the same phenomenon. This metric measures the extent to which the predicted outcome differs from the actual outcome. Below is a mathematical representation of MAE.:

$$
MAE = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{j=1}^{N} |y_i - x_i| \qquad ...(vi)
$$

where,

 $yi = Prediction$ $xi = True$ Value N = Total Number Of Data Points

R-squared (R^2) :- This indicator calculates the ratio of variables (air quality) that can be explained by individual variables (weather data, emissions data, and so on). A higher R2 indicates greater precision..

$$
R^{2} = 1 - \underline{\text{Sum Squared Regression(SSR)}}
$$

Total Sum Of Squares(SST)

$$
R^{2} = 1 - \frac{\sum (y_{i} - y_{i})^{2}}{\sum (y_{i} - y_{i})^{2}} \qquad \qquad \dots (vii)
$$

Root Mean Square Error (RMSE): The statistical metric known as root mean square error, or RMSE, calculates the average of the squared difference between the actual value and the predicted value produced by the model. It is essentially the mean square error (MSE) squared. Its implementation methodology may bear similarities to MSE.

RMSE =
$$
\frac{1}{N} \sum_{j=1}^{N} (y_i - x_i)^2
$$
 ... (viii)

Where,

 x_i = True Value $N = Total Number of Data Points$

Performance metrics are evaluated in order to verify the machine learning models. The system learning version performs better when the r-squared, RMSE, and MAE are reduced.

VIII. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the experiment for heart attack risk prediction involved utilizing established Machine Learning algorithms on the preprocessed dataset. Multiple models were developed and compared using the following algorithms: Logistic Regression, Support Vector Machine (SVM) Classification, KNN, Random Forest Classification, Decision Tree Classifier and Auto ML. The experiment utilized key medical attributes such as age, gender, cholesterol levels, resting blood pressure, fasting blood sugar, electrocardiogram results (ECG), maximum heart rate, chest pain type, exercise-induced angina, and previous medical history as inputs to predict the risk of a heart attack.

Fig 2. Confusion Matrix of Logistic Regression

Fig 2. Confusion Matrix of Logistic Regression

Fig 4. Graph of BPM

The results suggest that models utilizing AutoML and Logistic Regression demonstrate superior train and test accuracy compared to alternative algorithms, highlighting their effectiveness in predicting heart attack risk. Notably, AutoML and Logistic Regression achieved accuracies of 88.52% and 85.71%, respectively, indicating their strong performance in heart attack prediction. On the other hand, models like Support Vector Regression (81.32%) and K-Nearest Neighbors (84.62%) also performed well but were slightly less accurate than AutoML and Logistic Regression. Random Forest Classifier (75.82%) and Decision Tree Regressor (70.33%) exhibited lower accuracy, underscoring their reduced reliability in this context.

The evaluation of performance metrics for each model further supports the efficiency of AutoML and Logistic Regression versions in forecasting heart attack risk. Given the crucial role of early detection in cardiovascular diseases, utilizing machine learning, specifically AutoML and Logistic Regression, offers a dependable approach for modeling the complex interplay between patient attributes and heart attack risk factors.

Thorough attention to techniques like cross-validation, feature selection, and performance measure selection is vital throughout the process of model training and testing. This ensures the identification of the most suitable model for particular patient demographics and clinical scenarios. Model testing plays a pivotal role in identifying the optimal approach for accurate heart attack risk prediction, which can significantly improve preventive care and patient outcomes.

IX. FUTURE WORK

Regarding future research, there is a need for further studies to enhance the accuracy and applicability of heart attack prediction models, particularly in identifying high-risk cases and predicting uncommon events like sudden cardiac arrest. Incorporating advanced data sources and technologies, such as continuous monitoring from wearable devices, electronic health records (EHR), genetic data, 3D heart imaging, and real-time health data from Internet of Things (IoT) sensors, can significantly improve the performance of heart attack prediction models. These advancements would allow for more personalized risk assessments and enable earlier intervention, improving patient outcomes and healthcare delivery.

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