

Increased likelihood of male death from disease

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Research currently being undertaken at the University of Leicester may identify reasons underlying an increased risk of Abdominal Aortic Aneurysms (AAA) in men.

In her doctoral study, Cardiovascular Sciences student Lisa Bloomer is looking into the causes of the male predominance of AAA, with a particular emphasis on [genetic basis](#) of the disease. Preliminary results from the study will be showcased at the University of Leicester's Festival of Postgraduate Research on 24 June.

Miss Bloomer commented:

"AAA is the ballooning of the abdominal part of the major artery in the body. Rupturing of the weakened artery causes death in 80% of cases due to massive blood loss. The [Y chromosome](#), which is present exclusively in [men](#), may hold the key to deciphering why AAA has a 50% higher diagnosis rate in men than women.

"Staggeringly, AAA kills 10,000 men each year in England and Wales alone. The male-specific Y chromosome is a prime genetic suspect in AAA development, possibly acting as an independent risk factor."

A thorough DNA analysis tracking the most common forms of the Y chromosome amongst British men with AAA and those who are free of the disease is to be undertaken. It is hoped that the results from this research will be able to identify those individuals with a higher risk of

developing AAA due to their Y chromosome.

"We anticipate that certain forms of the Y chromosome will be more common in those with AAA than across the general population. Elucidation of a specific form of Y chromosome which significantly increases the risk of AAA development in men could potentially save thousands of lives each year."

Lisa's doctoral supervisor, Dr Maciej Tomazewski, Senior Lecturer in Cardiovascular Medicine, commented:

"The major portion of the Y chromosome, the male specific region, is inherited intact from fathers to sons. Tracking the paternal lineages of this region has proved to be successful in our previous studies on [coronary artery disease](#). Lisa's project is the first investigation that is using this strategy in relation to AAA."

Provided by University of Leicester

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