

Delirium following cardiac surgery common in older patients

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Delirium following cardiac surgery, a serious postoperative complication, is fairly common in older patients, affecting more than one-third of patients over 70 according to research to be presented at the American Psychiatric Association Annual Meeting in Honolulu

The research poster was scheduled for presentation on Saturday, May 14, at 10 a.m. at the 164th [American Psychiatric Association](#) Annual Meeting, which is in Honolulu May 14-18 at the Hawaii Convention Center.

[Delirium](#) is characterized by reduced clarity of awareness of the environment with reduced ability to focus, sustain, or shift attention. The presence of delirium after [cardiac surgery](#) has been associated with increase in [intensive care](#) stay, in length of hospital stay, sternal wound stability, sternal wound correction, and increased incidence of intubation. Previous research has found rates of delirium following cardiac surgery from 2 percent to 73 percent.

Researchers led by Adam Lau, M.D. evaluated 50 patients following cardiac surgery and found an overall incidence of delirium of 20 percent with a significant increase in incidence with age.

For those over 70 years old, the incidence was 38 percent and for those over 80, 43 percent. No patients under 70 developed delirium.

Provided by American Psychiatric Association

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