

High risk of cardiovascular diseases amongst Swedish-born and immigrant MS patients

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A new study from Karolinska Institutet shows that patients with multiple sclerosis (MS) run a high risk of heart attack, stroke and heart failure, regardless of migration background. According to principal investigator Tahereh Moradi, the study is the first in the world to examine the risk of cardiovascular diseases in male and female MS patients with both non-immigrant and immigrant backgrounds.

MS is a [chronic inflammatory disease](#) that breaks down the [central nervous system](#), and is the most common neurological cause of disability amongst young people. The study now published in the scientific periodical *Multiple Sclerosis Journal* examined over 8,000 [MS patients](#) between the years 1987 and 2009.

"It turns out that MS patients run a 85 per cent higher risk of [myocardial infarction](#), a 70 per cent higher risk of stroke, and a 100 per cent higher risk of [heart failure](#), results that are consistent in both young and elderly patients, and patients born in and outside Sweden, with the effect being particularly noticeable for women," says principal investigator Dr Tahereh Moradi, Associate Professor at Karolinska Institutet's Institute of Environmental Medicine.

With MS striking two in every 10,000 people, primarily women, every year, Sweden has one of the highest rates of the disease in the world; and despite the rising incidence of MS across the globe, its etiology is still unknown.

"These kinds of study have important public health and clinical implications," says Dr Moradi. "They can help us to understand the causes of MS and whether they resemble those of cardiovascular diseases. The results indicate how important it is that [preventative measures](#) against cardiovascular diseases are taken with MS patients, and that these patients, particularly the women, are kept under regular and careful observation."

The study was a joint initiative by Karolinska Institutet and Healthcare Provision, Stockholm County, and was conducted using the Migration and Health database, which is based on around a dozen national registers and designed for the study of diseases amongst socially disadvantaged groups, immigrants and children of immigrants in Sweden.

More information: Jadidi, E., Mohammadi, M. and Moradi, T. High Risk of Cardiovascular Diseases after Diagnosis of Multiple Sclerosis, *Multiple Sclerosis Journal*, online first 30 January 2013, [doi: 10.1177/1352458513475833](#)

Provided by Karolinska Institutet

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