

# ACC: Stressful events up incidence of acute MI

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(HealthDay)—Stressful events, including hurricanes, earthquakes, and financial crises, correlate with increased incidence of acute myocardial infarction (AMI), according to three studies to be presented at the annual meeting of the American College of Cardiology, held from March 9 to 11 in San Francisco.

Anand Irimpen, M.D., from the Tulane University Heart and Vascular Institute in New Orleans, and colleagues compared the incidence of AMI two years before and six years after [Hurricane Katrina](#). The researchers found that the proportion of admissions for AMI was 2.4 percent in the post-Katrina period and 0.7 percent in the pre-Katrina period. The post-Katrina group had significantly higher prevalence of comorbidities; had

more often been prescribed medications, including beta-blockers, aspirin, and [statins](#); and had lower adherence. They were also more likely to be unemployed, uninsured, and reside in New Orleans.

Masanobu Niiyama, M.D., from the Iwate Medical University in Japan, and colleagues examined the incidence and characteristics of patients with AMI and sudden death before and after the earthquake and tsunamis (March 11, 2011). The researchers found that, in the first week after the initial and second earthquake, there was an increase in the number of cases. Incidence was significantly increased for four weeks after the disaster (odds ratio, 1.73). In a third study, Emmanouil Makaris, M.D., from the General Hospital of Kalamata in Greece, and colleagues found that the incidence of AMI was higher during the financial crisis (January 2008 to December 2011) than in the pre-crisis period (January 2004 to December 2007), and was higher for women and for those older than 45 years.

"Unemployment is a stressful event and stress is connected with heart disease, but other issues also come with financial difficulties," Makaris said in a statement. "In these times a lot of people do not have money to buy medications or to go to their primary care doctor. There's a great increase in cardiovascular diseases across the country. The cost to the society is very high."

**More information:** [More Information](#)

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