

Fatigue, irritability, and demoralization can affect your heart health

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Fatigue, increased irritability, and feeling demoralized, may raise a healthy man or woman's risk of first-time cardiovascular disease by 36 percent, according to a study led by researchers at Mount Sinai St. Luke's and Mount Sinai Roosevelt hospitals presented on Nov. 17 at the American Heart Association's Scientific Sessions 2014 in Chicago, IL.

The combination of fatigue, increased irritability, and feeling demoralized is medically known as vital exhaustion. In their study, Mount Sinai researchers found that vital exhaustion was associated with a dramatic increase in risk for first-time [cardiovascular disease](#) when compared to people not experiencing these three psychological factors.

"Our study shows vital exhaustion is an important risk factor for the development of cardiovascular disease in otherwise healthy people," says lead author Randy Cohen, MD, Medical Director of the University Medical Practice Associates at Mount Sinai St. Luke's and Mount Sinai Roosevelt. "Loss of vitality thus adds to a growing number of [psychosocial risk factors](#) that have now been linked to the development of cardiovascular disease, including anxiety, depression, and social isolation."

Study researchers investigated the relationship between vital exhaustion and first-time [heart disease](#) in 11 prospective studies that involved 60,610 people without heart disease. The studies had an average follow-up of 6.5 years.

"The identification of vital exhaustion as a coronary artery disease (CAD) risk factor appears timely," according to study co-author Alan Rozanski, MD, Chief of the Division of Cardiology at Mount Sinai St. Luke's and Mount Sinai Roosevelt. "As society becomes increasingly fast paced, there is an increasing tendency for people to overwork while cutting back on sleep, exercise, and the rest and relaxation we all need to renew ourselves and prevent the factors that cause vital exhaustion."

Provided by The Mount Sinai Hospital

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