

Adults born with heart disease at increased risk of heart attack and death

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A study of adults up to age 70 shows a dramatically increased risk of heart attack in those who were born with heart disease.

Nicolas Madsen, MD, a pediatric cardiologist at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, and an international group of researchers looked at more than 14,000 patients in Denmark, which maintains robust patient registries. The researchers found that the risk of a heart attack among those younger than 50 who had congenital heart disease was 3 ½ times that of the general population. For those over 50, the risk was twice that of the general population.

"We're not used to thinking about [heart attack risk](#) in a 30 or 40 year old, but we should be in this population," says Dr. Madsen, who will present the study at 4:30 p.m. Eastern time Monday, Nov. 9, at the annual meeting of the American Heart Association in Orlando.

The researchers also looked at the outcome of a [heart attack](#), as measured by mortality at 30 days. The mortality of those with congenital heart disease was 16 percent - twice that of those without congenital heart disease. And for those who have a history of complex heart repairs for such conditions as tetralogy of Fallot and transposition of the great arteries, the risk was four times that of the [general population](#).

"The risk of mortality after 30 days is lower in Denmark than in the United States. Our numbers might be even worse," says Dr. Madsen. "Seeing an expert in [congenital heart disease](#) who can anticipate their

unique needs before an emergency occurs is critical to the long-term health of this population."

Provided by Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center

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