

Lower incidence of chronic illness for centenarians

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(HealthDay)—Among elderly veterans, the incidence of chronic illness

is lower for centenarians than octogenarians and nonagenarians, according to a study published online April 19 in the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*.

Raya Elfadel Kheirbek, M.D., M.P.H., from the Washington D.C. Veterans Affairs Medical Center, and colleagues conducted a retrospective study involving community-dwelling veterans born between 1910 and 1915 who survived to at least age 80 (31,121 octogenarians, 52,420 nonagenarians, and 3,351 [centenarians](#)). The authors examined the cumulative incidence of chronic conditions according to age group.

The researchers found that octogenarians had higher incidence rates of chronic illnesses than centenarians did ([atrial fibrillation](#), 15 versus 0.6 percent; heart failure, 19.3 versus 0.4 percent; chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, 17.9 versus 0.6 percent; hypertension, 29.6 versus 3 percent; end-stage renal disease, 7.2 versus 0.1 percent; malignancy, 14.1 versus 0.6 percent; diabetes mellitus, 11.1 versus 0.4 percent; and stroke, 4.6 versus 0.4 percent). Nonagenarians also had higher incidence rates of [chronic illnesses](#) than did centenarians (atrial fibrillation, 13.2 versus 3.5 percent; [heart failure](#), 15.8 versus 3.3 percent; chronic [obstructive pulmonary disease](#), 11.8 versus 3.5 percent; hypertension, 27.2 versus 12.8 percent; end-stage renal disease, 11.9 versus 4.5 percent; malignancy, 8.6 versus 2.3 percent; diabetes mellitus, 7.5 versus 2.2 percent; and stroke, 3.5 versus 1.3 percent).

"Centenarians had a lower incidence of chronic illness than those in their 80s and 90s, demonstrating similar compression of morbidity and extension of health span observed in other studies," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract](#)
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