

Asian-American groups vary in life years lost to premature heart disease, stroke

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Risks of death from heart disease and stroke vary among American-Asian subgroups, with Asian Indian, Filipino and Vietnamese populations at greatest risk for losing years of life to heart disease or stroke, according to new research in *Journal of the American Heart Association*, the Open Access Journal of the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association.

Asians make up the fastest growing racial/ethnic group in America, increasing 72 percent between 2000 and 2015—from 11.9 million to 20.4 million. By 2050, the American Asian population is predicted to grow to 41 million, according to the Pew Research Center, a nonpartisan research group tracking demographics and other data.

"Usually researchers combine Asian subgroups in studies, masking what might be important health differences," said Latha Palaniappan, M.D., M.S., study author and professor of medicine at Stanford University in California. "Looking at overall death rates might not reveal that some groups are dying prematurely from heart disease and stroke."

Palaniappan and colleagues studied U.S. death records from 2003 to 2012, examining average potential years of life lost before [life expectancy](#) in every 100,000 people in each Asian subgroup and non-Hispanic whites.

"A striking finding was that years of life lost due to stroke in women were greater for all of the Asian subgroups than non-Hispanic whites,"

she said. "This tells us that stroke is a very important contributor to [premature death](#), especially in Asian women."

They also found:

The average age of death from heart disease was younger among the Asian Indian subgroup. Heart disease accounted for almost 25 percent of all the years of potential life lost in Asian Indians, who lost an average 17 years to [heart disease](#).

Cerebrovascular disease was most likely to rob Vietnamese and Filipino men and women of life. Vietnamese people lost an average 17 years and Filipinos an average 16 years of life to [cerebrovascular disease](#). The most common presentation of cerebrovascular disease is an ischemic (clot-caused) stroke or mini-stroke and sometimes a hemorrhagic (bleeding) stroke.

"One of the benefits of the study is that we've identified these differences among Asian subgroups. Now we can create culturally-tailored and personalized preventive programs and guidelines for each group based on its unique risks," Palaniappan said.

More information: Divya G. Iyer et al, Years of Potential Life Lost Because of Cardiovascular Disease in Asian-American Subgroups, 2003–2012, *Journal of the American Heart Association* (2019). [DOI: 10.1161/JAHA.118.010744](#)

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