

HIV infection may increase heart failure and stroke risk

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A Journal of the American Heart Association analysis of information from a large health insurance database reveals that people living with HIV have an elevated risk of developing cardiovascular disease (CVD), particularly heart failure and stroke. The findings indicate that increased efforts to protect patients' cardiovascular health are needed.

For the study, researchers analyzed information on 19,798 people living with HIV and 59,302 age- and sex-matched uninfected individuals who were followed for an average of 20 months. People living with HIV had 3.2-times and 2.7-times higher risks of [heart failure](#) and stroke, respectively.

The association of HIV infection with CVD was especially strong for persons younger than 50 years of age and those without a prior history of CVD. People living with HIV did not have an increased risk of peripheral artery disease and only moderately increased risk of heart attack or [atrial fibrillation](#).

"Our findings reinforce the importance of primary prevention of [cardiovascular disease](#) through control of risk factors such as high blood pressure or smoking in persons living with HIV," said lead author Alvaro Alonso, MD, Ph.D., of Emory University, in Atlanta.

More information: Alvaro Alonso et al, HIV Infection and Incidence of Cardiovascular Diseases: An Analysis of a Large Healthcare Database, *Journal of the American Heart Association* (2019). [DOI: 10.1161/JAHA.119.012241](#)

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