

Gens X and Y show worrisome trend of declining health

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(HealthDay)—Gen X and Gen Y are showing poorer physical health and

higher levels of unhealthy behaviors compared with older generations, according to a study published online March 18 in the *American Journal of Epidemiology*.

Hui Zheng, Ph.D., and Paola Echave, both from The Ohio State University in Columbus, examined trends in mental and [physical health](#) among 62,833 adults participating in the National Health and Nutrition Examination Surveys (1988 to 2016) and 625,221 adults participating in the National Health Interview Surveys (1997 to 2018).

The researchers found that for all gender and [racial groups](#), physiological dysregulation increased continuously from Baby Boomers through late Gen X and Gen Y. The increase was greater for White men than other groups. Black men had the steepest increase in low urinary albumin (a marker of chronic inflammation). White individuals saw distinctive increases in anxiety, depression, and heavy drinking and additionally had a higher level of smoking and drug use than Black and Hispanic individuals. The increase in physiological dysregulation was not associated with smoking, but the obesity epidemic contributed to the increase in metabolic syndrome.

"The worsening physiological and mental health profiles among younger generations imply a challenging morbidity and mortality prospect for the United States, one that may be particularly inauspicious for Whites," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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