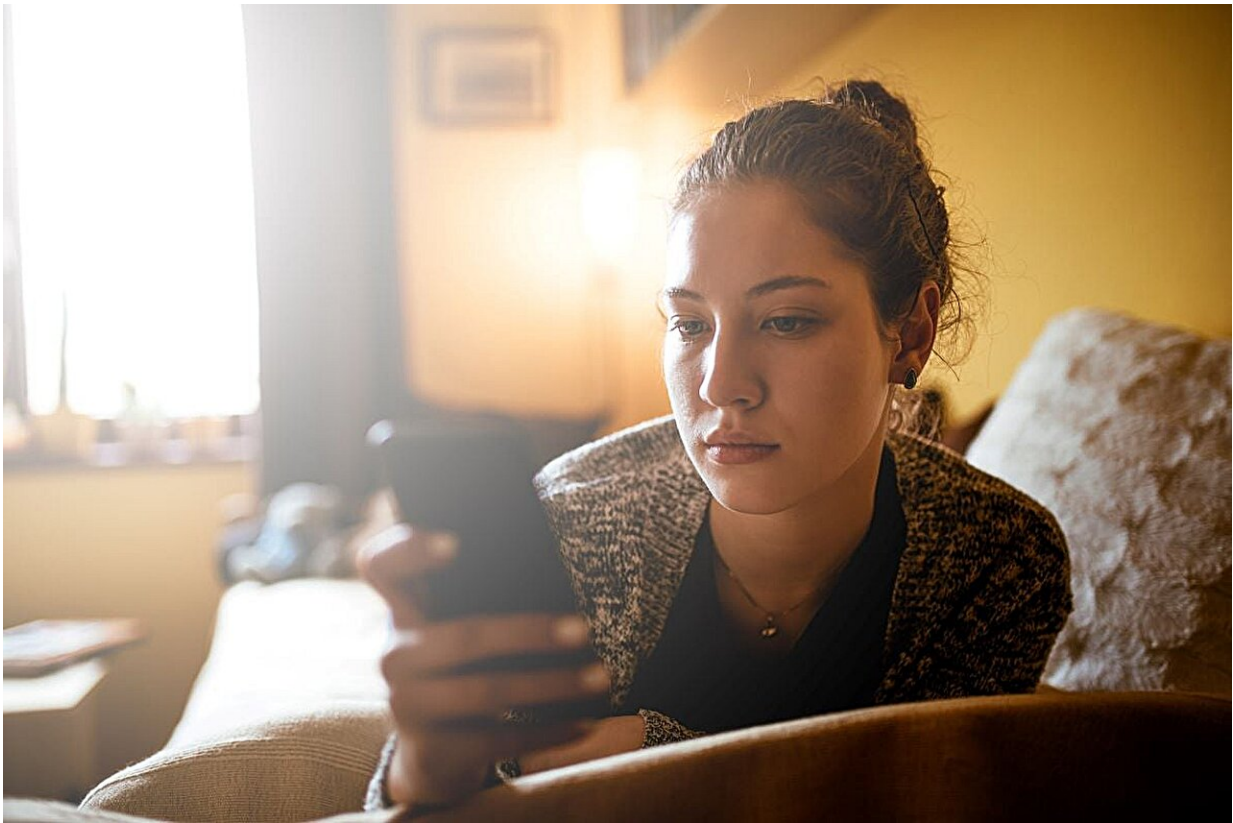


Too much time watching screens in 20s raises heart attack risk, warn experts

August 24 2024, by Ernie Mundell



Spend your youth glued to your phone, computer and TV and you cut your odds of making it to 60, a new [study](#) in the *Journal of General Internal Medicine* warns.

Data from a study tracking the health of more than 4,000 [young adults](#) for over 30 years found higher odds for [heart attack](#) for those who'd spent a lot of time watching TV in their early 20s.

"Our findings suggest that the amount of time young adults spend watching screens can significantly influence their risk of developing serious heart conditions later in life," said study lead author Dr. Jason Nagata.

"More screen time can displace important activities like sleep and physical activity," he added. "This underscores the importance of promoting healthy screen habits early in life to prevent future [heart disease](#) and stroke."

Nagata is an associate professor at the University of California, San Francisco's (UCSF) Division of Adolescent and Young Adult Medicine.

The new data comes from the longstanding Coronary Artery Risk and Development in Young Adults (CARDIA) study, which has tracked the heart disease risk of thousands of adults for decades.

Every additional hour spent watching television when participants were 23 years of age was tied to a 26% higher odds for developing heart disease over the course of the study. It was also linked with a 16% higher odds for heart attacks and/or strokes, the UCSF team found.

Screen time wasn't only dangerous in youth: Every additional hour of daily TV time during midlife also raised a person's odds for [coronary heart disease](#) by 55%, stroke by 58%, and overall heart disease by 32%, the study found.

What this seems to show is that "[screen time](#) in young adulthood sets the course for future screen habits through the rest of adulthood," Nagata

said in a UCSF news release.

More information: Nagata, J.M., et al. Television Viewing from Young Adulthood to Middle Age and Premature Cardiovascular Disease Events: A Prospective Cohort Study. *Journal of General Internal Medicine* (2024). doi.org/10.1007/s11606-024-08951-z

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