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Study: Native Hawaiians at higher risk of hemorrhagic stroke at younger age

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Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders may be at higher risk for hemorrhagic stroke at a younger age and more likely to have diabetes compared to other ethnicities, according to a study released today that will be presented at the American Academy of Neurology's 63rd Annual Meeting in Honolulu April 9 to April 16, 2011.

"Racial differences in stroke risk factors have been well-studied in Hispanic and African-American populations, but this is the first study to address people of Native Hawaiian ethnicity," said study author Kazuma Nakagawa, MD, with The Queen's Medical Center in Honolulu.

Data on 573 people hospitalized for intracerebral hemorrhage was taken from the "Get with the Guidelines-Stroke" database from The Queen's Medical Center over a period of six years. Of those, 18 percent were Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders, 63 percent were Asian, 16 percent were Caucasian, 0.2 percent were African-American and three percent were described as other.

On average, Native Hawaiians who experienced a hemorrhagic stroke were around the age of 55, more than 10 years younger than those from other racial groups which had a combined average age of 67 when a stroke occurred. More Native Hawaiians also had diabetes; 35 percent compared to other racial groups at 21 percent. There were no differences in gender or other cardiovascular risk factors between the groups.

"Knowing risk factors for certain populations is an important step

toward recognizing, treating and preventing stroke. More research needs to be done to determine which factors are contributing to stroke at such a young age in Native Hawaiians," said Nakagawa.

Provided by American Academy of Neurology

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