

US heart disease on decline: study

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Cases of heart disease in the United States have declined in the last several years, down to six percent of the population in 2010 compared to 6.7 percent in 2006, health authorities said Thursday. (c) 2011 AFP

The drop is likely due to better eating and lifestyle habits, said the report by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which compiled its data from a random telephone survey across all 50 states.

However, a breakdown of the data showed that heart disease remains more pronounced in some parts of the population than others.

For instance, the prevalence of self-reported coronary heart disease (CHD) was 7.8 percent among men but just 4.6 percent among women.

The highest number of cases were reported by American Indians and Alaska natives, at 11.6 percent versus those who identified themselves as Asians, [native Hawaiians](#) or Pacific Islanders at 3.9 percent.

Education also was a differentiating factor, with a heart [disease prevalence](#) of 9.2 percent among those with less than a [high school education](#) and those with more than a college education at 4.6 percent.

The worst ranking state for heart disease was Kentucky (8.2 percent) and the best was Hawaii (3.8 percent).

"The data from this report can help health planners develop more targeted prevention programs for states and populations with greater CHD prevalence," the CDC said.

[Coronary heart disease](#), a condition in which vessels that supply the heart with blood and oxygen are narrowed due to high cholesterol and [plaque buildup](#), is the leading killer of men and women in the United States.

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