Concerns: Cardiac Death

According to a systematic review and meta-analysis of dozens of studies, people with HIV have high rates of cardiac dysfunction

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Successfully treating HIV may reduce the risk of sudden cardiac death. Investigators analyzed data from more than 144,000 participants in a long-term study that recruits veterans newly diagnosed with HIV and matches them with HIV-negative vets according to age, year of diagnosis, sex and race. Between 2003 and 2014, a total of 3,036 cohort members experienced sudden cardiac death. Having HIV was associated with a 15 percent greater risk compared with being HIV negative—an excess risk that increased to 57 percent for those with a low CD4 count and 70 percent for those with an unsuppressed viral load. People with HIV who maintained a fully suppressed viral load or a high CD4 count did not have an increased risk of sudden cardiac death compared with the HIV-negative population. Other risk factors included age, male sex, smoking, having hepatitis C, obesity, alcohol use disorder, anemia, cardiovascular disease and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease.

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