

HIV-Positive Men's Risk of Heart Attack May Be Dropping

March 17, 2014

✖ The risk of heart attack for men with HIV appears to be dropping, at least in one specific, medically insured population, while for HIV-positive women the risk of cardiovascular disease (CVD) remains high, aidsmap reports. Two studies looking at each sex's risk of CVD were presented at the Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI) in Boston.

Kaiser Permanente conducted a study of heart attack risk among its California clients, matching 24,768 HIV-positive clients with 257,800 HIV-negative clients. On average, the clients were 40 years old. Ninety-one percent were men.

During the entirety of the 1996 to 2011 study period, people with HIV were 40 percent more likely to suffer a heart attack than those without the virus. However, this elevated risk was not constant throughout. Before 2003, HIV-positive people were 70 percent more likely to experience a heart attack. This figure dropped to 30 percent between 2004 and 2009. By 2010 to 2011, there was no apparent difference in heart attack risk based on HIV status.

These findings are not necessarily applicable to the general population, however.

In a different, longitudinal study, which was part of the Veterans Aging Cohort Study (VACS), researchers followed the incidence of CVD among a cohort of 2,190 women, 32 of whom had HIV and none of whom had CVD at the study's outset. After a median 5.9 years, there were 86 incidents of heart attack, stroke or other heart failure. The incidence among the HIV-positive women was 1.35 percent, while it was 0.53 percent among those without HIV. The researchers calculated that women with HIV had a 3.12-times greater risk of CVD than those without the virus. HIV drew down the average age of the first CVD incidence from 52.0 to 49.3 years old.

To read the aidsmap story, [click here](#).