



HIV Is Linked to a Doubled Risk of Heart Attack

Previous research established that the virus is associated with about a doubled risk of cardiovascular disease overall.

June 21, 2019 By [Benjamin Ryan](#)

Living with HIV is associated with about a twofold increased risk of heart attack, also known as acute myocardial infarction (AMI), according to a new systematic review and meta-analysis.

Previous research has established that HIV is associated with about a [doubled risk](#) of cardiovascular disease (CVD) overall. Recently, researchers have increasingly sought to parse that finding according to various CVD subcategories. For example, one new study looked at the [varying high rates of cardiac dysfunction](#) among people with the virus.

Publishing their findings in *The Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndromes*, researchers behind the systematic review and meta-analysis analyzed 16 published papers, including five studies that included HIV-positive individuals along with matched HIV-negative control subjects.

The studies' follow-up time ranged between 1.8 years and 6.3 years. Forty-four percent were conducted in North America and 31% in Europe.

The studies included 248,145 people with HIV, who had a median age of 40 years old; 81% of them were male, and 47% were white. They also included 1.37 million HIV-negative participants, who had a median age of 42 years old; 77% were male, and 50% were white.

The average respective prevalence of various health conditions among those with and without HIV was: high blood pressure, 19% and 15%; smoking, 46% and 49%; irregular lipids, 22% and 18%; and diabetes, 6% and 7%. None of the differences within these pairs were statistically significant, meaning they could have been driven by chance.

Among the HIV-positive participants, the average prevalence of AIDS across all the studies was 27%. Sixty-seven percent of the participants with HIV had been exposed to antiretroviral treatment.

In the five cohorts that included people with HIV along with matched HIV-negative individuals, the average rate of heart attack per 1,000 cumulative years of follow-up was 5.0 cases among those with HIV and 2.8 cases among those without the virus. This meant that people with HIV had a 1.96-fold increased risk of heart attack compared with HIV-negative individuals.

Various lifestyle changes, in particular [quitting smoking](#), may lower the risk of CVD among people with HIV. Additionally, the major ongoing clinical trial [REPRIEVE](#) is investigating whether the [use of statins](#) may mitigate the risk of CVD in the HIV population.

To read the study abstract, [click here](#).

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