Smoking Drives Heart Attacks

HIV-positive individuals studied for research on smoking and high blood pressure.

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People with HIV who kick the cigarette habit and regulate their high blood pressure likely slash their heart attack risk.

Researchers studied about 29,100 HIV-positive individuals. During a median 3.5 years of follow-up between 2001 and 2013, the group experienced 622 of two main types of heart attacks.

Researchers estimated that if no one in the group smoked, the individuals would see 22 percent fewer of one kind of heart attack and 38 percent fewer of another. If no one had high blood pressure, there would be a respective 26 percent and 41 percent fewer of the two types of heart attacks.

“These results suggest the importance of targeted smoking prevention efforts among people at risk for HIV,” says Keri N. Althoff, PhD, MPH, an associate professor in epidemiology at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and the study’s lead author.

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