

Health News You Can Use - Teen Edition



CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE

COMPARING OUR CRISIS HERE AND IN PUERTO RICO

THE FACTS

- **Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is the Nation's leading killer for both men and women among all racial and ethnic groups.**
- **Almost 1 million Americans die of CVD each year, which adds up to 42% of all deaths.**
- **Heart Disease is the #1 cause of death regardless of race or ethnicity, for both men and women in New York City.**

What is Cardiovascular Disease?

Cardiovascular disease (CVD) is an abnormal function of the heart or blood vessels. It can cause increased risk for heart attack, heart failure, sudden death, stroke and cardiac rhythm problems. This condition ultimately results in a decreased quality of life and decreased life expectancy.

How to Get Help:

Kingsbrook's Cardiology Suite is staffed by highly skilled medical and administrative staff that provides cardiac diagnostic procedures. The procedures in our Cardiology Suite are performed on an outpatient basis and include: Echocardiography, including transesophageal echocardiography (TEE), Stress Testing including all modalities, Nuclear Cardiology, 24 hour ambulatory EKG monitoring (Holter EKG) and tilt table testing. For more information please call 718-363-6501.

An Overview of CVD in the US/Brooklyn New York

One out of four Americans, will have cardiovascular disease and estimate of roughly 57 million. Close to one million of those very Americans end up dying as a result of complications of cardiovascular disease, an equivalent of 42% of all deaths. Heart disease and stroke result in roughly 6 million hospitalizations a year and is the reason for 10 million disabled Americans over the age of 65. Additionally, 34% of cardiovascular disease deaths occur before the age of 75. In addition, every 30 seconds a person dies from a heart disease—over 2,600 people die every single day.

Cardiovascular disease (CVD), specifically heart disease and stroke, kills more New Yorkers than any other condition. New York ranks 16th in the United States in age-adjusted deaths due to CVD. In 2002, the estimated direct (medical care) and indirect (lost productivity) cost of cardiovascular disease in New York was almost \$16 billion. This is approximately \$860 for each person in New York.

High blood pressure, obesity and sedentary lifestyles are all contributors to cardiovascular disease. In Central Brooklyn, 32% of residents were diagnosed with high blood pressure, 29% of adults in this region are obese and 47% admit they do not partake in daily exercise. Specifically in East New York Brooklyn, the cardiovascular disease hospitalization rate has increased by 35% in the past decade.

In light of this, the NYS Health Department, a network of partner agencies and colleagues around the state, are making significant progress in reducing CVD risk factors with particular focus on: daily physical activity, increased consumption of fruits, vegetables, and low-fat milk, reducing high blood pressure, lowering intake of salt, saturated fats, dietary cholesterol, and red meat, while increasing intake of dietary fiber. Finally, good diet plays a role in reducing CVD by helping people to maintain proper body weight.

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- **Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death in Puerto Rico.**
- **The mortality rate rose from 205 per 100,000 population in 1997 to 218 per 100,000 in 1999, when cardiovascular diseases accounted for 29% of all deaths.**
- **Heart disease had the highest mortality rate with 139 per 100,000. Ischemic heart disease mortality rate in men was 90 per 100,000 and in women was 67 per 100,000.**

An Overview of CVD in Puerto Rico

In spite of an apparently increasing mortality rate from coronary heart disease in Puerto Rico, the age-specific mortality rate from this illness is considerably lower on the island than in the U. S. For the last forty years, heart disease was ranked as a leading cause of death in Puerto Rico. In 1993, 142.6 people out of every 100,000 people in Puerto Rico were diagnosed with heart and cardiovascular disease. Death due to Coronary heart disease is 20% higher among mainland Puerto Rican women than Cuban or Mexican American. In Puerto Rico, cardiovascular diseases including heart disease, hypertension and high cholesterol are responsible for more than 30 % of all deaths. According to the CDC, more than 42% of Puerto Ricans have two or more of the following risk factors for cardiovascular disease: High Cholesterol, Obesity, Smoking and Physical Inactivity.

How to Get Help:

It is never too late ask for help, especially when you or a loved one is suffering from life-threatening cardiovascular diseases such as coronary heart disease, high blood pressure, heart failure and stroke etc. If an emergency occurs and medical attention is needed urgently, dial 9-1-1 to receive additional care or treatment. Remember that every second counts, especially when your life is in danger, so please do not hesitate to ask for help.

American Heart Association (AHA)
800-242-872 www.americanheart.org

American Stroke Association
888-4-STROKE
Strokeconnection@heart.org

Risk Factors

- *Increasing age* - Over 83 % of people who die of coronary heart disease are 65 or older. At older ages, women who have heart attacks are more likely than men are to die from them within a few weeks.
- *Male sex (gender)* - Men have a greater risk of heart attack than women do, and they have attacks earlier in life.
- *Heredity (including Race)* - Children of parents with heart disease are more likely to develop it themselves. African-Americans have more severe high blood pressure than Caucasians and a higher risk of heart disease.
- *Tobacco smoke* -Smokers' risk of developing coronary heart disease is 2–4 times that of nonsmokers.
- *High blood cholesterol* - As blood cholesterol rises, so does risk of coronary heart disease.
- *High blood pressure* - High blood pressure increases the heart's workload, causing the heart to thicken and become stiffer. It also increases your risk of stroke, heart attack, kidney failure and congestive heart failure.
- *Physical inactivity* - An inactive lifestyle is a risk factor for coronary heart disease.
- *Obesity and overweight* - People who have excess body fat - especially if a lot of it is at the waist - are more likely to develop heart disease and stroke even if they have no other risk factors.
- *Diabetes mellitus* - Diabetes seriously increases your risk of developing cardiovascular disease. diabetes, it's extremely important to work with your healthcare provider to manage it and control any other risk factors you can.
- *Stress* - Too much alcohol can raise blood pressure, cause heart failure and lead to stroke.

Log on to our website to view our teen round table episode discussion on CVD.
Go to our Health News TV link under "Community Programs & Events".



*This piece has been researched by students in the Kingsbrook/BQLI AHEC SHIP Mentorship program.
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