

Stroke in Mexican-Americans expected to rise 350 percent in next 40 years

9 February 2011

Strokes will increase dramatically over the coming decades, with increases being considerably steeper in Mexican-Americans compared with non-Hispanic whites, according to research presented at the American Stroke Association's International Stroke Conference 2011.

"The tremendous number of strokes projected has large personal, social and economic consequences for the United States," said Shawnita Sealy-Jefferson, M.P.H., an investigator at the School of Public Health at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

According to the American [Stroke](#) Association, stroke accounts for one out of every 18 deaths and is the third leading cause of death in the country.

Preliminary data released recently by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) shows stroke has dropped to the fourth leading cause of death, with 795,000 occurring yearly (610,000 of them first-time strokes).

Researchers, who used current trends to calculate the potential burden of stroke during the middle of the 21st century, expect: stroke among Mexican-Americans to rise from about 26,000 in 2010 to more than 120,000 in 2050 - about a 350 percent increase; and stroke among non-Hispanic whites to rise from about 300,000 in 2010 to more than a half million in 2050 - about a 75 percent increase.

The projections are based on data from the U.S. Census and data collected between 2000 and 2008 from the Brain Attack Surveillance in Corpus Christi (BASIC) Project, an ongoing community-based study in southeastern Texas that compares stroke in Mexican-Americans and non-Hispanic whites.

Both hemorrhagic (bleeding) and ischemic (blood clot) stroke were included in the analysis. To

calculate the projected numbers of stroke in the future, researchers assumed incidence rates would remain constant over the years. They took annual incidence rates and multiplied these figures by corresponding ethnic, age and sex-specific projected population counts by the decade.

"Efforts to prevent stroke and reduce stroke-related disability in both Mexican-Americans and non-Hispanic whites are critical," said Lynda D. Lisabeth, Ph.D., M.P.H., co-author and associate professor, Department of Epidemiology, University of Michigan. "Lifestyle changes can reduce one's risk for stroke."

More research is also needed to understand the excess burden among Mexican-Americans, she said. "Further study of stroke in Mexican-Americans may clarify new intervention targets. Our group is currently targeting stroke prevention through Catholic churches, which might be a novel setting for successful intervention in Mexican-Americans."

Provided by American Heart Association

APA citation: Stroke in Mexican-Americans expected to rise 350 percent in next 40 years (2011, February 9) retrieved 4 May 2021 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2011-02-mexican-americans-percent-years.html>

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