Top Things To Know

Status of Cardiovascular Disease and Stroke in Hispanics/Latinos in the United States

1. More than 53 million Hispanics currently live in the United States, and are the fastest-growing racial or ethnic population expected to constitute 30% of the total US population by 2050.

2. Cardiovascular research has relied heavily on national surveys of US Hispanics yet many of these surveys have examined Hispanics as an aggregated group without identifying their background of origin.

3. This review provides a brief background in immigration history, socioeconomic status (SES) factors, psychosocial characteristics, and other information concerning the Hispanic population not often learned by healthcare professionals in their education or training.

4. Understanding the diversity among Hispanics may:
   • help promote cultural sensitivity and competency, which is important in addressing the burden of cardiovascular disease (CVD) in the Hispanic population;
   • clarify the need for disaggregation of Hispanic subgroup categories in the health research and academic literature;
   • better inform the relationship of CVD/cardiovascular health (CVH) in the US Hispanic population;
   • impact intervention and future study design; and
   • improve the understanding of factors that contribute to health disparities for US Hispanics.

5. The current demographic profile of U.S. Hispanics is described in terms of SES characteristics including education, income and wealth, occupation, insurance status, and SES heterogeneity among the various Hispanic subgroups.

6. Although Hispanics are not bonded by shared physical characteristics, the fusion of Spanish, African, and Amerindian culture, religion, and histories has given rise to a rich cultural heritage, an intertwined history, a common language, and several cultural characteristics that are common across the varied Hispanic subgroups and influence health and health decisions.

7. Associated stress of cultural adaptation, as well as the concomitant behavioral changes, renders acculturation a significant explanatory variable related to CVH and CVD risk among Hispanics.

8. Prevalence of CVD risk factors and event incidence are reviewed with respect to US Hispanics as this group is significantly less aware of CVD as the leading cause of death and of their personal risk factors for CVD compared to non-Hispanic whites.

9. Recommendations include the need to tailor and develop culturally relevant strategies to engage Hispanic individuals in CVH-promoting behaviors and to engage and educate healthcare providers regarding the Hispanic population towards the goal of CVD risk reduction and deployment of culturally competent CVH interventions and care for Hispanics.

10. Understanding and overcoming the challenges of successfully implementing the AHA’s 2020 Impact Goals among the US Hispanic population would result in an overall benefit in CVH nationwide and could help reduce CVD disparities for all Americans.


http://circ.ahajournals.org/lookup/doi/10.1161/CIR.0000000000000071

© 2014, American Heart Association. All rights reserved.