CARDIOVASCULAR RISK IN A PREVIOUSLY UNDESCRIBED HISPANIC POPULATION

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INTRODUCTION
- Hispanics are the largest and fastest growing minority in the US, increasing from 12.5% to 14.5% between 2000-2005.
- Hispanics as a whole have the lowest rate of educational attainment and the highest rate of poverty which may translate into a greater risk of disease.
- Nationally, 66.9% of Hispanics are Mexican, 14.3% Central or South American, 8.6% Puerto Rican, 3.7% Cuban, and 6.5% of other origin. While the health and mortality risks of Mexican-Americans have been systematically studied, those of other groups have been largely overlooked.
- In 2005, 64.7% of Miami residents were Hispanic: 53.2% Cuban, 39.2% South or Central American; only 3.8% were Mexican.
- Florida Heart Research Institute (FHRi) has been offering free cardiovascular screenings since 1998; 71.5% of those screened were Hispanics.

STUDY OBJECTIVES
To compare the cardiovascular risk profile of a population of Hispanics in Miami who are responsive to public health outreach with that of a similar group of non-Hispanic whites (NHW).

METHODS
- An analysis of retrospective data from 4302 participants age 18 and over collected during the course of free public cardiovascular screenings was done.
- Screenings were publicized through radio public service announcements, radio interviews in both Spanish and English, bilingual brochures and flyers distributed at public health fairs and, increasingly, by word of mouth.
- No incentives were provided to participants other than a report of their cardiovascular risk factor profile, educational brochures and counseling to seek further medical attention when needed.
- A self-reported medical history was used to determine presence of coronary heart disease and medication use, based on a written questionnaire administered in Spanish and English. Demographics were similarly gathered.
- Two sitting blood pressure measurements performed with a mercury sphygmomanometer were averaged.
- A fasting venous sample was drawn for a lipid profile, glucose and a-c reactive protein.
- Weight and height were measured and used to calculate body mass index (BMI).
- Data were stratified by age: <=45 (low age risk) and >45 (high age risk) for men and <=55 (low age risk) and >55 (high age risk) for women.
- Chi-square and t tests were used to determine significant differences between groups.

RESULTS
- Participating non-Hispanic whites in Miami were significantly older than Hispanic participants. This reflects both the entry of younger Hispanics to Miami and emigration of young non-Hispanic whites to other areas. The following data are reported for the high age risk groups.
- High age risk Miami Hispanics had higher levels of Stage II hypertension than non-Hispanic whites. This is in contrast with what has been reported for Mexican-Americans.

CONCLUSIONS
- The Miami-Dade population presents a distinct and heretofore understudied Hispanic population. The Hispanics in this study who were in the high age risk category demonstrate a risk pattern distinct from that previously described for the Mexican-American population.
- Compared with NHWs, Miami-Dade Hispanics display a higher prevalence of obesity, hypertension, triglycerides and low HDL.
- These findings define targets for intervention focus in his high risk population.