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Cardiovascular Risk in A Previously Undescribed Hispanic Population

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Abstract:

BACKGROUND

Even though Hispanics form the largest ethnic minority in the U.S., Mexican-Americans are the only segment of the Hispanic population whose cardiovascular (CV) risk has been well studied. In Miami-Dade, FL, where 69.5% of the population is Hispanic but only 3.8% are Mexican, The Florida Heart Research Institute screened 2,804 Hispanics, (1,799 women, 1,005 men) from this largely non-Mexican population for CV risk factors, and compared them to a control group of 1,498 non-Hispanic whites (NHW), (860 women, 638 men).

METHODS

Data from people participating in voluntary, free cardiovascular screenings, between 1997 and 2006, included measurements of blood pressure (BP), height, weight, fasting blood glucose, and lipid profile, and calculation of Body Mass Index (BMI) and Framingham Risk Scores. Data were stratified by age (≤45 and >45 for men, ≤55 and >55 for women), gender and ethnicity. x-square tests and t-tests were used to determine significant differences between groups, with a significance level (α) set at 0.05.

RESULTS

Among men >45, Hispanics are more likely to be overweight or obese (p <.001), exhibit Stage 2 hypertension (p = .021), and lower HDL (p< .019). Similarly, among women >55, Hispanics are more likely to be overweight (p<.001) or obese (p = .002), exhibit Stage 2 hypertension (p = .001) and lower HDL (p<.001). Hispanic women ≤55 were also more likely than NHW women to be overweight (p<.001) or obese (.001). Use of BP medication and smoking was similar between groups. When Framingham risk scores were compared, Hispanics did not display significantly higher scores than NHWs solely due to the older age (p<0.001) of the NHW subjects in this cohort.

CONCLUSIONS

Despite comparable Framingham scores, the Hispanics in this study demonstrate a risk pattern distinct from that previously described for the Mexican American population. They are at elevated CV risk, specifically as regards obesity, hypertension and HDL, which define targets in this population for focused intervention.

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