



UC San Diego Research Looks Into Heart Disease Among Latinas

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A stethoscope is pictured, June 17, 2009.

significantly associated with higher levels of diabetes and that Latino women spend about 12 hours per day sitting — a level that is higher than Latino men and other groups."

Allison said UCSD researchers will determine the risk factors for prolonged sitting time, if sitting behavior can be modified or reduced and if the differences lead to changes in risk factors for diabetes and cardiovascular disease all among Latinas.

Sheila Castaneda, a research assistant professor in the Graduate School of Public Health at San Diego State University, will also participate in the research, exploring biopsychosocial and ecological correlations of Latina sedentary behavior.

Castaneda's study will focus on a predominantly Mexican heritage population in San Diego as a starting point to learn what contributes to excess or prolonged sitting throughout the day.

Allison said the center will collaborate with investigators at the San Ysidro Health Center System, the South Bay Latino Research Center and the University of North Carolina, and conduct a training program for the next generation of researchers who will become leaders on women's cardiovascular health.

Roughly 375,000 Americans die of heart disease annually, making it the number one killer in the U.S. Stroke is fifth.

According to UCSD, Hispanics face even higher risks of cardiovascular disease than the general

The [UC San Diego School of Medicine](#) announced on Monday the start of a four-year, \$3.7 million multidisciplinary [research](#) center to investigate the relationship between sedentary behavior and cardiovascular risk factors in Latinas.

"Compared to other groups, [Latino](#) women have a high risk for developing diabetes, which is a strong risk factor for cardiovascular disease, such as heart disease and/or stroke," said Dr. Matthew Allison, professor in the Division of Preventive Medicine at UCSD.

"Previous research has demonstrated that higher levels of sedentary behavior — for example, sitting time — is significantly associated with higher levels of diabetes and that Latino women spend about 12 hours per day sitting — a level that is higher than Latino men and other groups."

population, due to elevated rates of hypertension, obesity and diabetes. On average, the Heart Association says, Hispanic women are likely to develop heart disease 10 years earlier than non-Hispanics.

An AHA report last year labeled cardiovascular disease as the leading cause of death in Latino females — 29.1 percent. An estimated 5.9 percent of Latina women have coronary heart disease, 1.7 percent have had a heart attack and 2 percent have had a stroke.

The UCSD center is part of a research network created and funded by the American Heart Association.

The network includes the Magee-Womens Research Institute in Pittsburgh, which will look into cardiovascular risk during pregnancy; Johns Hopkins University, prevention strategies for at-risk heart failure patients; New York University, the role played by stress in heart disease; and Columbia University, the role of sleep in heart disease.

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