

## Keralites face highest risk of cardiovascular disease, finds study

A study based on two recent national surveys of nearly 8,00,000 adults between 34 and 70 years, has found that people of Kerala — across sexes — were most at risk of cardiovascular diseases while those in Jharkhand were least likely to have the condition. A gender break down, however, puts the women of Goa at highest mean cardiovascular risk at 16.73% while men in Himachal Pradesh and Nagaland were most vulnerable with mean cardiovascular risk of 24.23%.

The surveys carried out between 2012 and 2014, found wide variations in the average 10-year risk of a fatal or nonfatal cardiovascular disease event among States. A paper published on June 19 in *PLOS Medicine* found the risk ranging from a low of 13.2% for both sexes in Jharkhand to 19.5% in Kerala.

### Urban tendency

The study, led by researchers at Public Health Foundation of India and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, found that adults in urban areas, as well as those with a higher household wealth, tended to have a greater cardiovascular risk. The study used the data from the District Level Household Survey-4 (DLHS-4) and the second update of the Annual Health Survey (AHS). The surveys covered 27 of the 29 States and five of the seven Union Territories.

With 19.90%, adults living in urban areas in Kerala had the highest mean risk, followed by West Bengal (19.12%) and Himachal Pradesh (18.97%). In contrast, those living in urban areas of Daman and Diu had the lowest mean risk (12.60%), followed by Bihar (13.63%) and Arunachal Pradesh (14.71%).

In general, the cardiovascular risk is lower in rural areas compared with urban areas. But Goa has bucked this trend with the rural areas showing a higher mean value (18.92%) than the urban areas (18.79%).

In the case of Kerala, the difference between highest mean risk in rural (19.23%) and urban areas (19.90%) is meagre. The same questionnaire and methodology was used throughout to collect clinical, anthropometric, and biomarker measurements.

While smoking was more prevalent in poorer households and rural areas, wealthy households and urban locations faced risks from high body mass index, high blood glucose and high systolic blood pressure.

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