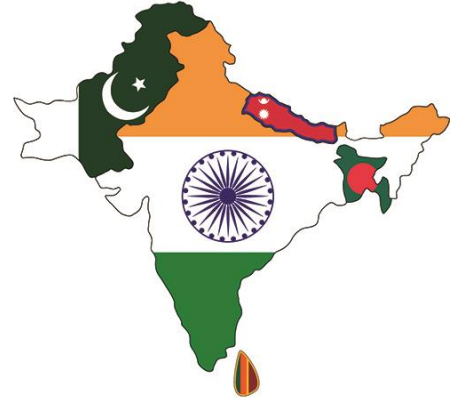


Cardiovascular Risk in South Asians



People from South Asian countries (including India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal and Pakistan) are at a higher risk for cardiovascular disease compared to people from other parts of the world. This includes anyone who was born in these countries, or who has ancestry from these countries but live in other parts of the world.



The facts:

- South Asians have twice the risk for developing coronary artery disease (CAD) compared to Caucasians.
- They also face 40% higher mortality due to CAD than white Caucasians.
- 50% of all heart attacks in Indian men occur under 50 years of age, and 25% of all heart attacks happen under 40 years of age. This is 10-15 years earlier than people from other parts of the world.
- India accounts for approximately 60% of the world's heart disease burden, even though it holds less than 20% of the world's population.

The reasons:

The traditional risk factors for heart disease are: cigarette smoking, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, and having an unhealthy diet and sedentary lifestyle. These risk factors are important in all populations, including South Asians.

However, even accounting for these traditional risk factors, South Asians remain at higher risk for developing heart disease and death due to heart disease. The mechanisms behind this are not completely understood. Researchers are currently trying to better understand why this is the case.

How can we lower this risk in South Asians?

- Traditional risk assessment methods likely underestimate risk in South Asians. At SANSAR's South Asian Cardiovascular Risk Assessment Clinic, we help to determine the health of your heart, and the risk you are at for developing heart disease. Our South Asian physicians provide culturally-specific counselling and medical advice, so that you can take action in your own life and reduce your risk. [Learn more.](#)
- Research has shown that heart disease is preventable, with heart healthy lifestyle habits in place. SANSAR's health education materials provide information on topics including nutrition, exercise, stress reduction, smoking, etc. [Learn more.](#)
- SANSAR's Risk Management Program will begin in 2016 and will be available for free to all South Asian adults in the Greater Toronto Area. Through the program, group classes will be offered that will cover topics including South Asian diet and cooking, exercise, stress reduction, smoking cessation, medication adherence, etc. [Learn more.](#)