

HAWAI'I JOURNAL WATCH

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Highlights of recent research from the University of Hawai'i and the Hawai'i State Department of Health

RISK FACTORS FOR EARLY KIDNEY DISEASE IN HAWAI'I IDENTIFIED

Filipinos and Native Hawaiians face higher risk of early kidney damage than other racial/ethnic groups in Hawai'i, and this may be partially explained by their chronic diseases rates. Researchers led by Merle R. Kataoka-Yahiro DrPH, of the School of Nursing and Dental Hygiene, gathered data from 2944 community-dwelling adults at kidney disease screening programs in Hawai'i from 2006 through 2017. Results adjusted for age and sex showed Native Hawaiian participants were 1.50 times more likely, and Filipino participants were 1.44 times more likely, than non-Hispanic white participants to have an elevated albumin to creatinine ratio (ACR) in their urine, an early marker of kidney damage. When the researchers adjusted for major kidney disease risk factors, Filipino participants remained 1.36 times more likely to have an elevated ACR, but the difference between Native Hawaiian and white participants became nonsignificant. The researchers concluded that targeted interventions are needed to delay disease progression and improve outcomes among Native Hawaiians and Filipinos in the US.

- Kataoka-Yahiro MR, Davis J, Rhee CM, Wong L, Hayashida G. Racial/ethnic differences in early detection and screening for chronic kidney disease among adults in Hawaii: A 10-year population health study. *Prev Chronic Dis.* 2020;17:E84. doi:10.5888/pcd17.200011

EXPERIENCES DURING FOSTER CARE AFFECT YOUNG ADULTS' SOCIAL LIVES

The experiences of children in foster care may influence their choice of friends and social contacts during young adulthood. Researchers led by Amanda Yoshioka-Maxwell PhD, of the Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work, investigated the characteristics of the social networks of homeless young adults with a history of foster care. They surveyed 184 homeless former foster youth in California in 2015 and 2016, asking about risk behaviors, foster care experiences, social networks, and the behaviors of the people in their networks. Results showed youth who first experienced homelessness before exiting foster care were more likely to have social contacts who engaged in condomless sex, and youth with higher numbers of foster care placements were more likely to have social contacts who used methamphetamine. More research is needed to identify ways to reduce the risk factors associated with foster care, such as homelessness during foster care and number of placements.

- Yoshioka-Maxwell A, Rice E. Exploring the relationship between foster care experiences and social network engagement among a sample of homeless former foster youth. *Child Youth Serv Rev.* 2020;116:105132. doi:10.1016/j.chidyouth.2020.105132

RISK FACTORS FOR OVERWEIGHT OR OBESITY IN CHILDREN ON GUAM

Children on Guam are at high risk of developing overweight or obesity (OWOB). Researchers including Lynne R. Wilkens DrPH, of the University of Hawai'i Cancer Center, gathered data from

865 children ages 2 to 8 who participated the Children's Healthy Living Program, to investigate the risk factors for developing OWOB. Results showed 27.4% of children in the study were affected by OWOB. Children with OWOB were significantly more likely to suffer from sleep disturbances, and consumed more sugar-sweetened beverages than healthy weight children. Neither children's fruit and vegetable intake, nor their meeting screen-time recommendations differed significantly between those with OWOB and those at a healthy weight. There was a high prevalence of family stressors, such as food insecurity, among all study participants. The researchers concluded that discussions of healthy cultural behaviors should be included in obesity interventions.

- Leon Guerrero RT, Barber LR, Aflague TF, et al. Prevalence and predictors of overweight and obesity among young children in the Children's Healthy Living Study on Guam. *Nutrients.* 2020;12(9):E2527. doi:10.3390/nu12092527

KĀNAKA MAOLI VIEWS ON HEALTH AND RESILIENCE

Integrating holistic practices, including connections to the 'āina (land), is important in improving the health of Kānaka Maoli (Indigenous Peoples of Hawai'i). Researchers including Samantha Keaulana, a doctoral student in the Office of Public Health Studies, conducted interviews and small focus groups with 12 Kānaka Maoli adults in Waimānalo to learn about their perspectives on health. Results of the qualitative analysis showed the Kānaka Maoli view the connection between 'āina and people as spiritual and reciprocal, and important to health and resilience. They also viewed physical, mental, and spiritual health as dependent on a deep connection with 'āina. Finally, they viewed the impacts of colonization as a disruption to their values and connections with 'āina, and said that community initiatives were needed for community healing. The researchers concluded that addressing the health disparities experienced by Kānaka Maoli stemming from colonization will require healing the displacement and disconnection from 'āina felt by Kānaka Maoli.

- Keli'iholokai L, Keaulana S, Antonio MCK, et al. Reclaiming 'āina health in Waimānalo. *Int J Environ Res Public Health.* 2020;17(14):5066. doi:10.3390/ijerph17145066

DATA FROM POISON CONTROL CENTERS YIELD IMPORTANT PUBLIC HEALTH INFORMATION

The system designed to comb through millions of calls to Poison Control Centers and identify incidents of public health significance (IPHSs) does indeed provide high-quality data to state and local public health professionals. Researchers including Alvin C. Bronstein, MD, of the Hawai'i State Department of Health, analyzed the system, in which toxicologists at the American Association of Poison Control Centers and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention jointly monitor the data, looking for anomalously high call volume, specific clinical symptoms, or certain defined types of cases. Results showed 1431 of the 39 107 anomalies identified during 2013 to 2018 represented IPHSs. The agent most commonly associated with IPHSs was carbon monoxide. The researchers concluded the system assists public health personnel in responding to outbreaks and epidemics.

- Carpenter JE, Chang AS, Bronstein AC, Thomas RG, Law RK. Identifying incidents of public health significance using the National Poison Data System, 2013-2018. *Am J Public Health.* 2020;e1-e4. doi:10.2105/AJPH.2020.305842