

Meditation Reduced Heart Disease Risk in Black Adults

Black adults who meditated saw a 65% relative risk reduction in cardiovascular events over a five-year period.

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Transcendental meditation (TM) may significantly reduce the risk for heart attack, stroke and death in Black people at high risk for [cardiovascular disease](#), according to a study [published in Frontiers in Medicine](#).

In the United States, [use of meditation as a complementary health approach jumped](#) from 7.5% in 2002 to 17.3% in 2022, making it the most used complementary health approach nationwide.

The study encourages [meditation](#) as a stress-reducing technique that may reduce the risk for [cardiovascular](#) events, including [heart attack](#), [heart failure](#) and [stroke](#), in Black adults, according to a [Maharishi International University \(MIU\) news release](#).

In the United States, Black people have a higher risk for heart disease, stroke and high blood pressure, according to the [American Heart Association](#).

In fact, nearly 60% of Black adults ages 20 and older have cardiovascular disease, such as coronary heart disease and heart failure. What's more, Black adults account for over 50% of heart failure hospitalizations among adults under 50.

For the randomized controlled study, which was funded by the National Institutes of Health (NIH), researchers followed 200 Black men and women in Los Angeles to compare TM to a standard health education program. Results showed a 65% relative risk reduction in cardiovascular events over a five-year period among Black adults who practiced meditation regularly.

"Our findings replicate and extend earlier NIH-funded research showing that reducing stress

through meditation has real, lasting benefits for heart health,” said Robert Schneider, MD, FACC, senior investigator and director of MIU’s center for natural medicine and prevention, in the release.

Although both the TM and health education interventions prevented the progression of atherosclerosis, a buildup of plaque in the arteries, TM group offered “remarkable protection for cardiovascular health,” according to the release.

The researchers emphasize that integrating TM into community-based health care programs could be an accessible, low-cost way to reduce cardiovascular disease in high-risk populations.

“This trial is a significant contribution to addressing racial disparities in cardiovascular outcomes. We found that transcendental meditation, a simple, stress-reducing technique, may help prevent heart disease progression and reduce clinical events in a population that is often underserved and at high risk,” said Keith Norris, MD, PhD, a UCLA professor and the study’s first author.

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