

RACIAL DIFFERENCES IN CEREBROVASCULAR DISEASES: A COMPARISON BETWEEN CHINESE AND OTHER RACES

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Cerebrovascular diseases are the most common cause of death in mainland China. It was the leading cause of death from 1963 to 1982, and has become the second cause of death afterward in Taiwan. The stroke incidence in China is more than fivefold that of myocardial infarction. The incidence is about 1.5 times of that in North America. Intracerebral hemorrhage causes about one third of all strokes in China, nearly three times the proportion reported by stroke registries in North America.

The distribution of cerebrovascular lesions varies in different races. Blacks and Japanese have more intracranial cerebrovascular disease,

while whites have more extracranial disease. The preponderance of intracranial vascular lesions in Chinese is similar to that seen in blacks and Japanese.

The reasons why Chinese and other Asian populations including Japanese are prone to intracerebral hemorrhage and intracranial lesions remain to be elucidated. Although environmental and dietary factors and hypertension play some important roles, genetic components supported by the relative higher incidence of other intracranial arteriopathies (e.g., moyamoya disease) may also be significant determinants in Asians. (*J Natl Public Health Assoc (ROC)*: 1993; 12(3):219-230)

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