

## Autoimmune diseases linked with incident cardiovascular disease

Autoimmune diseases have been associated with cardiovascular disease (CVD) risk, but questions remain about these relationships and the implications for preventing CVD.

Investigators used large databases from the UK to study the associations between 19 of the most common autoimmune diseases and CVD outcomes. They ultimately identified approximately 446,000 eligible people with a new autoimmune disease diagnosis (mean age at diagnosis, 47 years; 61% women) and more than 2.1 million controls, matched by demographic and clinical characteristics, who did not have an autoimmune disease.

During a median follow-up of 6.2 years, 15.3% of people with an autoimmune disease and 11.0% of



## What happens when you don't wash your sheets

A third of your life is spent in bed. So clean bed linens should be a must-do. Think of the drool, sweat, and dandruff you leave behind. Wash them weekly or every other week.

**Mite-y gross:** Daily skin cell loss is 500 million. As you roll around in bed, many shed. Between washes, dead cells accumulate on sheets. Dust mites eat shed cells. Their droppings can trigger allergies, asthma, and eczema. Wash bedding weekly in hot water if you are allergic to dust mites.

**Pet peeves:** Sleep with your pet? Dust mites love pet hair and dander on bedding. Your skin may become itchy and irritated if your dog has mange, also called animal scabies. Pets can also spread scalp ringworm. Change sheets weekly.

**Bacterial bed buddies:** Dead skin, sweat, and saliva can turn your bed into a germ incubator. Unwashed pillowcases harboured 17,000 times more bacteria than toilet seat samples.

**Bedroom breakouts:** Why is your acne worsening? Possibly a dirty pillowcase. Dirt, dead skin, and bacteria clog pores. If you get breakouts, change

your pillowcases every 2-3 days and your bedding weekly.

**Sickly sheets:** If you or your partner is sick, wash your sheets to kill germs. Microbes can live on soft surfaces for minutes to hours. Microbe-specific duration. Flu viruses live on tissues for 15 minutes, but stomach bugs for 4 hours.

**Pillow toss:** Sleeping on fungus can be dangerous for asthma patients. Wash your pillow twice a year if it can be. Follow the label's instructions. To prevent mildew, rinse and dry well. Wash pillow protectors with pillowcases.

**Sheet swaps:** Some other things can add to the icky factor between your sheets. Strip the bed weekly (or even more often) if you:

- Sleep in the nude
- Snack in bed
- Sleep with your kids
- Sweat a lot at night

**Let your sheets breathe:** Making your bed is supposedly the best way to start the day. But don't rush. Every night, moisture accumulates in your sheets. When you wake up, remove the covers to dry the bed. It is less appealing to bacteria and mites.

**Wash day tips:** Use the hottest water recommended on the care label. Then dry it. Some germs that survive the wash can be killed by the dryer, studies show. Use bleach on your sheets if it is safe for the colour, especially after a sick person.

**Dirty duvets and more:** Some comforters or duvet covers are not machine washable. So, check labels before you launder. Stick to this cleaning schedule for a fresh bedroom:

- Comforters, blankets, and duvet Covers: Once every 1-2 months. (If you do not use a top sheet, wash them when you do your sheets.)
- Mattress pad: Wash four times a year
- Bed skirt: Every 3-6 months
- Vacuum your mattress when you launder the bed skirt to suck away dust and dirt.

**Bedbugs:** They like warm, populated places like your bed. Bedbugs bite at night. Bite marks may be itchy.

To ensure that your bed is consistently in its best, consider washing them more frequently.

Source: WebMD

## Low levels of vitamin D can put you at risk for stroke

MANZIA NOOR

Stroke is the second leading cause of death, causing 5.7 million deaths annually. Recent research has identified vitamin D deficiency as an independent risk factor for stroke, particularly "ischemic stroke," which reduces blood supply to the brain due to clots blocking blood flow in the vessels. Other research shows that decreased vitamin D levels worsen stroke severity and prognosis. Many recommend vitamin D for stroke treatment.



Many neuroprotective mechanisms have been proposed for how vitamin D prevents ischemic stroke.

• Low vitamin D levels can stiffen blood vessels, increasing the risk of vessel occlusion and reducing blood flow to brain cells.

• Vitamin D deficiency decreases protective protein expression, leading to BBB dysfunction. Vitamin D protects the BBB by inhibiting harmful oxygen species.

• Vitamin D deficiency is linked to obesity, diabetes, and hypertension.

The 25-hydroxy vitamin D blood test accurately measures vitamin D levels. Healthy people need 20-50 ng/mL.

Diet, supplements, and sun exposure treat vitamin D deficiency. Sunlight is the best source of Vitamin D. Spend 10-30 minutes each week in midday sunlight. Sun exposure time depends on skin sensitivity. Indoor dwellers, those who cover up outdoors, and those with darker skin are at risk for vitamin D deficiency. Year-round, they should take 10 micrograms of vitamin D. Others may only need winter supplements.

If you have chronic kidney disease, consult your doctor before taking supplements. Vitamin D is found in mushrooms, fatty fish, oysters, shrimp, sardines, etc.

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controls had incident CVD (hazard ratio, 1.56). This significantly higher CVD incidence was documented across patient subgroups, with the greatest risks in people with systemic sclerosis, Addison's disease, systemic lupus erythematosus, and type 1 diabetes.

The increased risk was found in each analysed CVD category — and was greatest for myocarditis and pericarditis, peripheral artery disease, and infective endocarditis. Traditional risk factors did not explain the findings.

Source: Journal Watch

### Most reliable estimates to date suggest one in eight COVID-19 patients develop long COVID symptoms

One in eight adults (12.7%) infected with SARS-CoV-2 experience long-term symptoms due to COVID-19, suggests a large Dutch study published in The Lancet.

The main symptoms were chest pain, difficulty breathing, painful muscles, loss of taste and/or smell, tingling hands/feet, a lump in the throat, feeling hot and cold, heavy arms and/or legs, and general tiredness.

Three months after infection, the severity of these symptoms plateaued. Headache, itchy eyes, dizziness, back pain, and nausea did not worsen three to five months after COVID-19 diagnosis.

Of the study participants who had submitted pre-COVID symptom data, the researchers found 21.4% (381/1,782) of COVID-19-positive participants, compared to 8.7% (361/4,130) of the control group, experienced at least one increased core symptom at moderate severity 3 months or more after SARS-CoV-2 infection.

This implies that in 12.7% of COVID-19 patients, their new or severely increased symptoms three months post-COVID can be attributed to SARS-CoV-2 infection.



## Rediscovering the power of morality & wellbeing

DR RUBAIUL MURSHED

Global unrest has increased since the millennium, risking social unrest. Health promotion and wellness activities are popular now. Science and culture affect "social ethos," especially morality and lifestyle. We were not taught to help the poor in school. The education system undervalues moral education.

According to studies, immoral treatment reduces happiness. Moral education and health are social assets. Schools nurture, develop, and empower young minds to build mentality and wellbeing. Wellbeing and success in school depend on students' moral values. Good deeds, hormones, and mental health are linked. Introducing a new morality-based science can improve internal health and help people live well with 'nature.'

"Morality" is a new science that compares conformist morality's principles and content while demonstrating the effects of their practices. Japanese philosopher Dr Hiroike Chikuro gave it a scientific shape. He founded Reitaku University and the Morality Institute. His insight, theory, and concept of Morality were to establish "a definite method of perfecting the supreme character of an individual man" It recommends studying and practising not only customary and traditional ethics and morality but also wise men's and saints' moral values. World first. Today, we realise that the culture of moral values affects mental health, especially among young people. Japan's moral education has gained popularity. This emphasises

morality and mental health. It includes a sound mind. Dr Osama Nakayama talked about new spirituality in Japan and moral education a few years ago. Basic needs, well-being, and morality fulfil human potential, according to a Darcia-edited book.

In today's world, morality and psychosomatic health are strongly linked. Plato, Aristotle, and modern psychologists Peterson and Seligman all spoke of the link between moral goodness and mental fitness. Plato wrote that virtue is "the health, beauty, and wellbeing of the soul," and moral failure leads to unhappiness, unfulfillment, and illness.

Moral psychology is helping us understand human morality using developmental psychology, neuroscience, and other fields. Scientists are rediscovering the importance of morality in daily life. Our Brains Are Wired for Morality: Evolution, Development, and Neuroscience is a Chicago University study on the development of moral cognition and behaviour in young children.

Morality also increases happiness and people's sense of meaning and purpose in life. Moral identity is linked to subjective well-being, a study found. We cannot afford to ignore moral issues in today's uncertain world and changing social cultures. In the context of the global pandemic and unexpected newer dramatic conflicts raging in the first quarter of the new century, moral issues can be resolved by considering 'living with moral courage and the 'concept of Morality'.

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