Latinos May Develop Alcoholic Liver Disease Earlier

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A new study on ethnicity and drinking-related liver problems in the United States has found that Latinos tend to develop alcoholic liver disease (ALD) at an earlier age than non-Hispanic whites and African Americans, HealthDay reports.

ALD includes conditions such as alcoholic fatty liver disease, alcoholic hepatitis and alcoholic cirrhosis. The disease is responsible for more than 15,000 U.S. deaths every year.

For the study, scientists looked at the medical records of more than 800 ALD patients treated between 2002 and 2010. Data showed that Latinos seem to develop ALD an average of four to 10 years earlier than their white and black counterparts.

In addition to being younger, Latinos diagnosed with ALD tended to have higher rates of obesity and diabetes. They were also more likely to be hospitalized for alcoholic cirrhosis than whites.

Researchers say their findings, which were published in Alcoholism: Clinical & Experimental Research, lay the groundwork for future studies linking the interactions between alcohol, genetics, and cultural and environmental factors.

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