

New to Vancouver: The Effects of Residential Relocation on Cardiovascular Disease Risk

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Abstract : Moving has become an integral part of many people's lives. This research explores whether relocating to a new city is associated with an increase in loneliness and cardiovascular disease risk and if this increased risk diminishes with continued residency. To test this, various psychosocial variables and three cardiovascular disease risk markers (C-reactive protein, albumin, blood pressure) were assessed on two groups of individuals: those who have moved to Vancouver, Canada in the previous 6 weeks ('Movers') and those who have lived in Vancouver for at least five years ('Non-Movers'). It was hypothesized that individuals who had recently relocated would have heightened levels of loneliness, blood pressure (BP), albumin, and C-reactive protein (CRP) compared to those who had not recently relocated. Length of residency was hypothesized to moderate these effects, such that after a few months, loneliness levels and cardiovascular disease risk would decrease among those who had recently relocated. Correlational analysis indicated a trend between the change in CRP and albumin levels and loneliness overtime on an individual level. However, these results must be interpreted with caution due to the small sample size. As Vancouver's immigration rates continue to grow, this study has important implications regarding the social support resources offered to new immigrants, as well as bringing awareness at the healthcare level of the potential increase in cardiovascular disease risk among those who have recently relocated.

Keywords : cardiovascular disease risk, loneliness, moving, residential mobility

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