**HEALTHY LIFESTYLE FACTORS AND RISK OF ABDOMINAL AORTIC ANEURYSM IN THE PHYSICIANS' HEALTH STUDY**

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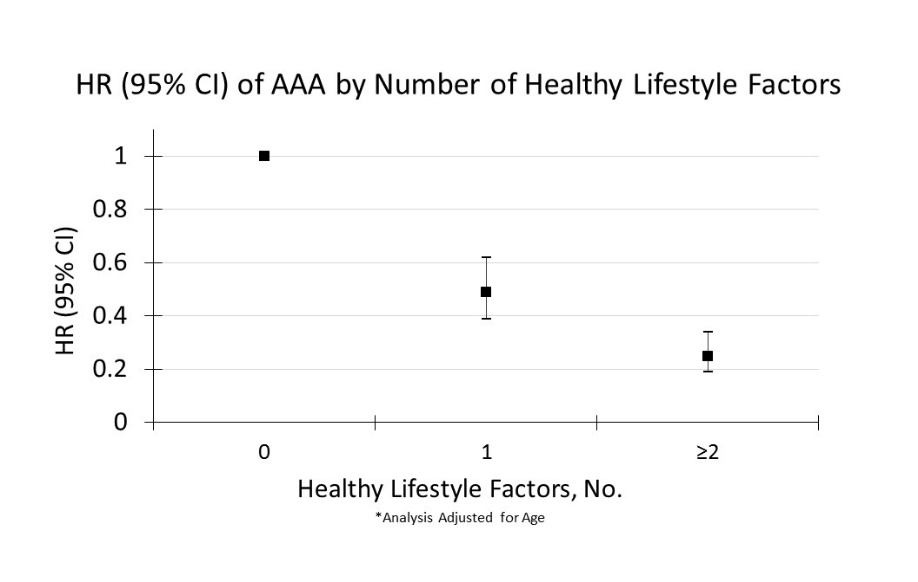
**Background:**Abdominal aortic aneurysm (AAA) is an increasingly recognized cause of morbidity and mortality in the aging US population. While healthy lifestyle factors have been associated with a lower risk of coronary events, stroke, and death, little is known about their impact on AAA risk.

**Objective:**To examine the relation of healthy lifestyle factors with risk of AAA in middle-aged and older men.

**Methods:** Prospective study of 20,424 male physicians who were apparently healthy and free of AAA at baseline. Modifiable lifestyle factors including body weight, smoking, and exercise were assessed at baseline and dichotomized into healthy (not smoking, regular exercise, and normal BMI) vs. unhealthy. Incidence of clinically diagnosed AAA was self-reported on annual questionnaires and validated in a subsample. Cox regression models were used to calculate hazard ratios (HRs) and 95% confidence intervals (CIs) of AAA.

**Results:**Mean age at baseline was 66.6 years. During a mean follow-up of 9.4 years, 359 cases of newly diagnosed AAA were reported. Compared with men reporting no healthy lifestyle factors, the HR (95% CI) of incident AAA was 0.49 (0.39 - 0.62) for men reporting 1 healthy factor and 0.25 (0.19 - 0.34) for men reporting ≥2 healthy factors (p<0.001), after adjustment for age.

**Conclusions:**In this large cohort of apparently healthy men, adherence to healthy lifestyle factors is associated with a lower risk of clinically diagnosed AAA.

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