

# LETTER TO THE EDITOR

---

## CARDIOMETABOLIC RISK AMONG THE FOREIGN-BORN POPULATION IN THE UNITED STATES: NEW PATHWAYS FOR INNOVATIVE RESEARCH AND HEALTH POLICY

Rob Stephenson, PhD; Solveig Argeseanu, PhD; Reena Oza-Frank, MS, MPH, RD;  
Mark Hutcheson, BA; K. M. Venkat Narayan, MD, MSc, MBA

To the Editor:

The migrant population in the United States continues to change, rapidly increasing in number and diversity, raising public health concerns about the need to provide care to people with a wide range of social, cultural, and epidemiologic backgrounds. Of particular concern is the potential for increases in the prevalence of chronic disease among migrant groups.

In an attempt to improve understanding of the cardiometabolic risks faced by the migrant population in the United States, The Rollins School of Public Health at Emory University recently convened an interdisciplinary workshop that brought together experts in cardiometabolic disease and migration: "Migration and Cardiometabolic Risk: Obesity and Diabetes among Foreign-Born People in the United States." Several challenges and future directions in the study of migrant cardiometabolic health were identified. Participants identified the need to adopt a holistic approach to migrant health and consider the entire migration experience, including the social, cultural, and economic environments of the places of origin and destination as contributors to migrant cardiometabolic health.

Researchers working with migrant populations should also establish appropriate control groups, recognizing that control groups may be drawn from the migrants' place of origin or from comparable ethnic populations in the host country. Studies of migration and cardiometabolic risk should be expanded to examine potential effects that go beyond individual migrants: migration may have consequences for family members, communities, institutions, and nations. The result of the workshop was the creation of a Network of Migration and Disease (NOMAD). NOMAD aims to develop multidisciplinary collaborative research efforts to examine issues of cardiometabolic health among the migrant population in the United States, with the goal of providing new information to develop interventions tailored to the specific circumstances of migrants. Such information is vital to develop health care systems that are appropriate for the changing population of the United States and for addressing the needs of migrant groups within this population. Those interested in finding out more about NOMAD activities are invited to contact us or can visit our website: <http://www.sph.emory.edu/nomad/>.

---

From the Hubert Department of Global Health, Rollins School of Public Health, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia (RS, SA, ROF, MH, KMVN).

Address correspondence and reprint requests to: Rob Stephenson; Hubert Department of Global Health; Rollins School of Public Health; Emory University; 1518 Clifton Rd; Atlanta GA, 30322; 404-727-9976; [rbsteph@sph.emory.edu](mailto:rbsteph@sph.emory.edu)