

THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF OLDER ADULTS WITH VENTRICULAR SEPTAL DEFECTS

M MAAGAARD^{1,2,3}, F ECKERSTRÖM³, AS LUND SCHRAM^{1,2}, HA ROSENDAHL JENSEN⁴, V HJORTDAL³.
¹DEPT. OF CARDIOTHORACIC AND VASCULAR SURGERY, AARHUS UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL, DENMARK ²DEPT. OF CLINICAL MEDICINE, AARHUS UNIVERSITY, DENMARK
³DEPT. OF CARDIOTHORACIC AND VASCULAR SURGERY, RIGSHOSPITALET, COPENHAGEN UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL, DENMARK ⁴NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF PUBLIC HEALTH, UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN DENMARK, DENMARK

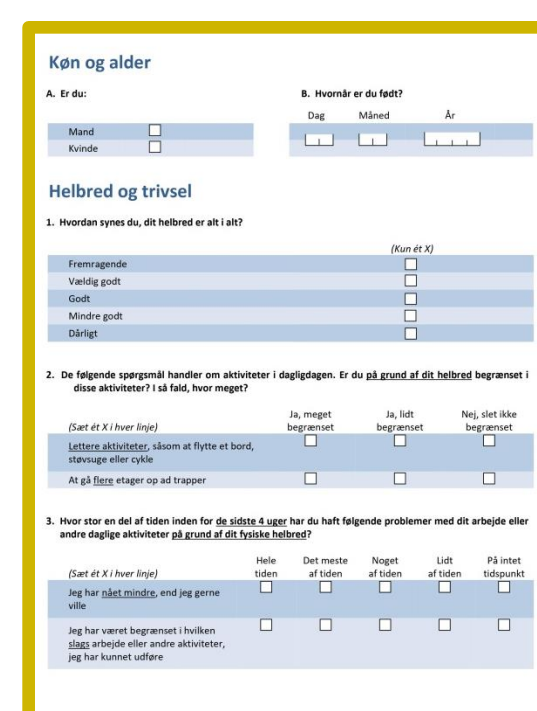
BACKGROUND

- Small, unrepaired or surgically closed ventricular septal defects (VSD) are considered a benign congenital lesion with good outcome
- Fifty-year-old VSD patients were recently found with reduced heart rate variability, exercise capacity and biventricular contractility during physical activity*

How is the quality of life, health behavior and self-rated physical and mental health in 50yr-old VSD patients in Denmark?

METHODS

- **Questionnaire:** The Danish National Health Survey. Contains 52 questions on health behavior. Distributed nationwide
- **Patients:** Adults with a VSD, unrepaired or surgically closed, aged 40–70 years
- **Controls:** data from completed forms in the same time period distributed to the background population. Matched on age and gender with the patients



RESULTS

- **Study population:**
 - 600 controls, background population (52.5±10yrs)
 - 60 VSD patients (52.9±10yrs)
 - 30 unrepaired (no spontaneous closure, all restrictive)
 - 30 surgically-closed (closure age 6.3yrs, no sign. residual shunting)
- **Sociodemographic data** comparable (employment status, social relations, cohabiting status, alcohol consumption and physical activity habits)
- **SF-12 Quality of life:** VSD lower on physical functioning (p<0.01), general health perception (p=0.02) and physical component score (p=0.04). Mental component scores were comparable
- **Perceived stress level:** 9% VSD report of high levels of stress vs. 2% of the background population (p=0.01)
- **Illness** in adults with a VSD:
 - 40% suffered from migraine vs. 27% controls (p=0.02)
 - 12% were currently severely depressed vs. 5% controls (p=0.03)
 - 87% had had contact with health services within 1yr vs. 74% (p=0.03)

Subgroup analysis

Short Form 12	Surgically closed VSD	Unrepaired VSD	p-value
Physical functioning	48 (39 – 56)	56 (48 – 56)	<0.01
Role physical	48 (43 – 57)	57 (48 – 57)	0.01
General health perception	45 (30 – 45)	45 (45 – 56)	0.01
Physical component score	47 (42 – 53)	53 (48 – 57)	<0.01

Medians with (total ranges)

TAKE-HOME MESSAGE

- Adults in their mid50s born with a VSD report of:
 - Lower self-rated physical functioning and health perception
 - Higher levels of stress
 - More contacts with health services
 - More migraine
 - More severe depression
- Although simple in anatomy, the long-term outcome is far from simple. Careful follow-up of this aging patient group is indisputably warranted.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Marie Maagaard, MD, Ph.D

E-mail: maagaard@clin.au.dk

Dept. Of Cardiothoracic and Vascular Surgery, Aarhus University Hospital

Palle Juul-Jensens Boulevard 99, Aarhus, Denmark



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