

#EA21: Middle-Aged Men More Likely to Die After Surgery Than Middle-Aged Women



New research presented at Euroanaesthesia 2021 shows that middle-aged men are nearly 50% more likely to die after surgery than middle-aged women.

Previous studies also report sex differences in the risk of complications after surgery, but the results have been mixed. One study showed that men were at higher risk of complications and death after non-cardiac surgery. Another surgery showed that survival rates after vascular surgery were lower in women than men. Yet another study found no differences in death rates between men and women.

This particular study included more than 100,000 non-cardiac patients. Study participants underwent different elective procedures such as hip replacement, cancer surgery, and emergency surgeries such as acute appendicitis and operations after car accidents.

Findings show that mortality rates are higher in men in their 40s and 50s and those in their 60s and 70s. In the 41-80 age group, men were more likely to be admitted to the ICU, more likely to need ventilation and more likely to die before discharge compared to women of the same age. Men aged 41-60 were 22% more likely to be admitted to the ICU than women of the same age and 37% more likely to need ventilation, and 54% more likely to die. Men aged 61-80 were 20% more likely to be admitted to the ICU than women of the same age, 31% more likely to need ventilation and 38% more likely to die. However, after 80, men and women had about the same risk of ICU admission, ventilation and death.

The researchers found no link between a patient's sex and the likelihood of the patients being admitted to the post-anaesthesia care unit. They also did not observe any link between sex and ICU admission, need for ventilator or death in those under 40 years.

Overall, these findings show that men aged between 40 to 80 are at a higher risk of death in the days after their operation and are also more likely to be admitted to the ICU and to be ventilated.

While the reasons for this difference are unclear, the researchers highlight that the higher rates of cardiovascular problems in men could be one possible explanation. Also, men undergo health checks less often than women, and their health problems may be discovered later, which could be another reason. In addition, injuries from car accidents and other life-threatening trauma are more common among men, so the results may be skewed.

More research is needed to confirm these findings, but at this point, it is important to acknowledge that men are at a higher risk of complications after surgery and increasing men's awareness of their health and associated complications is important.

Source: [Euroanaesthesia 2021](#)

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