

## **Genetic Science Spotlight**

## A Study From Harvard University Indicates DNA Is Not Destiny







One person in five has a combination of genes that puts them at high risk of suffering a heart attack. However, a new research study led by Harvard University and Massachusetts General Hospital researchers has found that, even among people with high genetic risk of heart disease, they are still in control of their fate. No smoking, regular exercise and a healthy diet could reduce their risk of suffering coronary artery diseases by 50%, the researchers found. Published in the New England Journal of Medicine, the researchers analyzed genetic and clinical data from 55,685 participants who have enrolled in 4 large-scale, long-term studies. Lead author Dr. Sekar Kathiresan said: 'Some people may feel they cannot escape a genetically determined risk for heart attack, but our findings indicate that following a healthy lifestyle can powerfully reduce genetic risk. DNA is not destiny. This study suggests that the fate of our health is not bound irrevocably to our genetic makeup. If we have a healthy lifestyle, we have the ultimate power to control our overall risk.

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