Do Age at Migration and Time in the U. S. Mean Worse Health Among Hispanics?

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What Do We Know?
- Duration of U.S. residence is associated with health outcomes among Hispanic immigrants.
- Prior research has found that recent Hispanic immigrants are in better health than those with longer duration of U.S. residence.
- Longer duration of U.S. residence is also associated with increased risks of smoking, drinking, illegal drug use and unhealthy diet.
- One possible explanation for the duration effect is "acculturation" - suggesting that over time Hispanic immigrants adopt harmful health behaviors.
- This duration effect is also referred to as the "negative acculturation hypothesis".

What Do We Not Know?
- Whether health behaviors and access to health care vary by age at migration and duration of U.S. residence.
- For example, Hispanic immigrants who migrated early in life may have different health behaviors and access to health care than those migrated at older ages.
- Whether these differences vary by type of health behavior or indicators of access to health care.

Research Questions
- Does the relationship between duration of U.S. residence and health outcomes and access to health care among Hispanic immigrants vary by age at migration?
- Do these associations vary by types of health behavior and access to health care?

Data and Sample
- Data are pooled from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) 1999-2011.

Study Outcomes: Positive and Negative
- Has a regular source of health care (Yes/No).
- Has health insurance (Yes/No).
- Recent rigorous/moderate physical activity (Yes/No).
- Current smoking (Yes/No).
- Moderate/heavy drinking (Yes/No).
- Obese (BMI ≥30) (Yes/No).

Explanatory variables:
- Age at migration: Migrated before age 25, or at age 25 or above.
- Duration of residence: <10, 10-19 or 20+ years.
- Age, sex, education, poverty income ratio and marital status.
- Statistical strategy: Logistic regression accounting for NHANES sampling design.

Multivariate Results: Predicted Probabilities of Study Outcomes by Duration and Age at Migration

Conclusions and Discussion
- Those who migrated below age 25:
  - A significant increase in ALL risky health behaviors (smoking, alcohol use, obesity).
  - A significant increase in health insurance coverage.
  - Those who migrated at ages 25+:
    - No significant change in all risky health behaviors.
    - A significant increase in ALL positive outcomes.
- Future research should consider age at migration and the nature of health outcomes in studying the impact of duration of U.S. residence among immigrants.