

## **Mexican Older Adults in a Mixed Epidemiological Regime**

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### **Abstract**

**Background:** Mexico is undergoing an epidemiological transition. Advances in medicine have improved life expectancy alike other developing countries. Chronic non-communicable diseases affect a large percentage of older adults, while many of these adults are still exposed to infectious agents that cause communicable diseases. How this mixed disease regime affects the health and wellbeing of older Mexican adults is not well understood.

**Methods:** Data comes from the Mexican Health and Aging Study (MHAS) 2001 and 2003, a national representative sample of adults aged 50 and older. A total sample of 12,207 was included for the analysis. Logistic regression analyses were conducted to study the relationship between self-reported health and its covariates under a mixed regime of non-communicable and communicable diseases. Changes in self-reported health between 2001 and 2003 were also analyzed using multinomial analysis by type of disease.

**Results:** More than 16% of adults 50 years and older reported poor health, 11.5% had at least one communicable disease, and 58.3% had at least one non-communicable disease. Controlling for socioeconomic covariates, the estimated probability of reporting poor global health was higher among those who had only non-communicable (19.36%) compared to only communicable (11.48%) diseases. However, poor health was significantly higher (34.12%) for individuals with both communicable and non-communicable diseases ( $p=0.000$ ).

**Conclusions:** While the epidemiological transition has advanced in Mexico, a mixed regime of diseases still prevails and affects the overall quality of health among older populations. This mixed regime affects the dynamics of self-reported quality of health and impacts socio-demographic groups differently.