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Basic News Story – Left-handers study

Are Left-Handers Dying Sooner than Right-Handers?

A study conducted last year at California State University compared the death and accident rates of left- and right-handed people according to the New England Journal of Medicine.

In pursuit of answering why fewer left-handed people were among the elderly, CSU psychology professor, Diane Halpern, and her colleague, University of British Columbia researcher Stanley Coren, teamed up to conduct this study.

Halpern and Coren studied 987 death certificates and found that right-handed females tend to live six years longer than left-handed females, and right-handed males live 11 years longer than left-handed males.

Their study also showed that left-handed people were four times more likely to die from injuries while driving than right-handers. The two researchers determined that left-handers were more prone to automobile accidents considering almost all engineering accommodates right-handers.

So why are there fewer left-handed people among the elderly?

“There are many, many old left handers...,” Halpern said. “The truth was that there simply weren’t many left-handers left alive compared to right-handers.”