

Have women with chronic diseases been more negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic than men ? Results from the iCARE Study

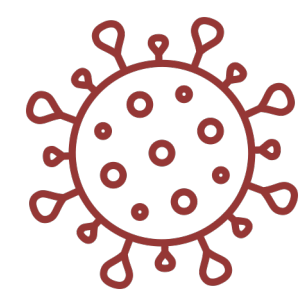
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Introduction

- COVID-19 has taken a toll on Canadians
- The pandemic have divers repercussions on the population
 - Worse mental health, worse health behaviours, disrupted access to care¹⁻²
- Certain subgroups may be particularly vulnerable to the impact of the pandemic including people living with chronic disease (CDs; e.g., heart and lung disease)
 - CD affects 44% of the Canadian population of 20 years+.³
 - Having a CD is a risk factors for COVID-19 complications
 - The pandemic has impacted the management of CDs (e.g. access to care, rehabilitation, etc.)⁴



Objectives

To assess the difference of COVID-19 impacts according to sex and health condition.

Methodology

Participants and procedure

As part of the iCARE study (www.icarestudy.com), data from four Canadian representatives samples (N= 12,016) were collected between June 4, 2020 to March 23, 2021.

Individuals ages 18 years and over completed the iCARE survey using the online polling services of Leger.

Measures

iCARE survey : 57 questions, 20 minutes

Impacts module : « COVID-19 has affected several aspects of people's lives. Please rate the extent to which COVID-19 has impacted the following aspects of your life »

Impacts assessed :

Mental health :	Anxious
	Depressed
	Frustrated
	Suspicious and distrustful
Health behaviours :	Less active
	Worse diet
	More alcohol
Healthcare system:	I cancelled medical appointments or didn't present to the ER
	I had trouble getting access to none COVID care

Scale : *not at all, very little, somewhat, to a great extent*

Analyses

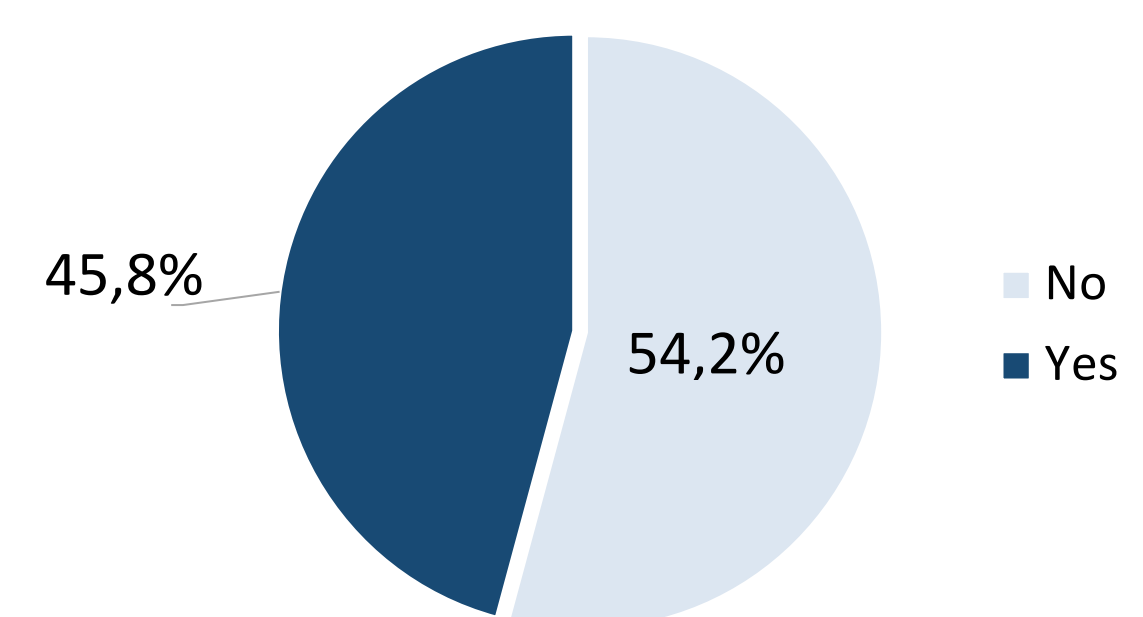
- Descriptive statistical analyses were conducted to explore differences in socio-demographics
- Logistic regression models were used to examine the multidimensional impacts of COVID-19 on Canadians with VS without CDs and assessed the extent of any sex differences.

References

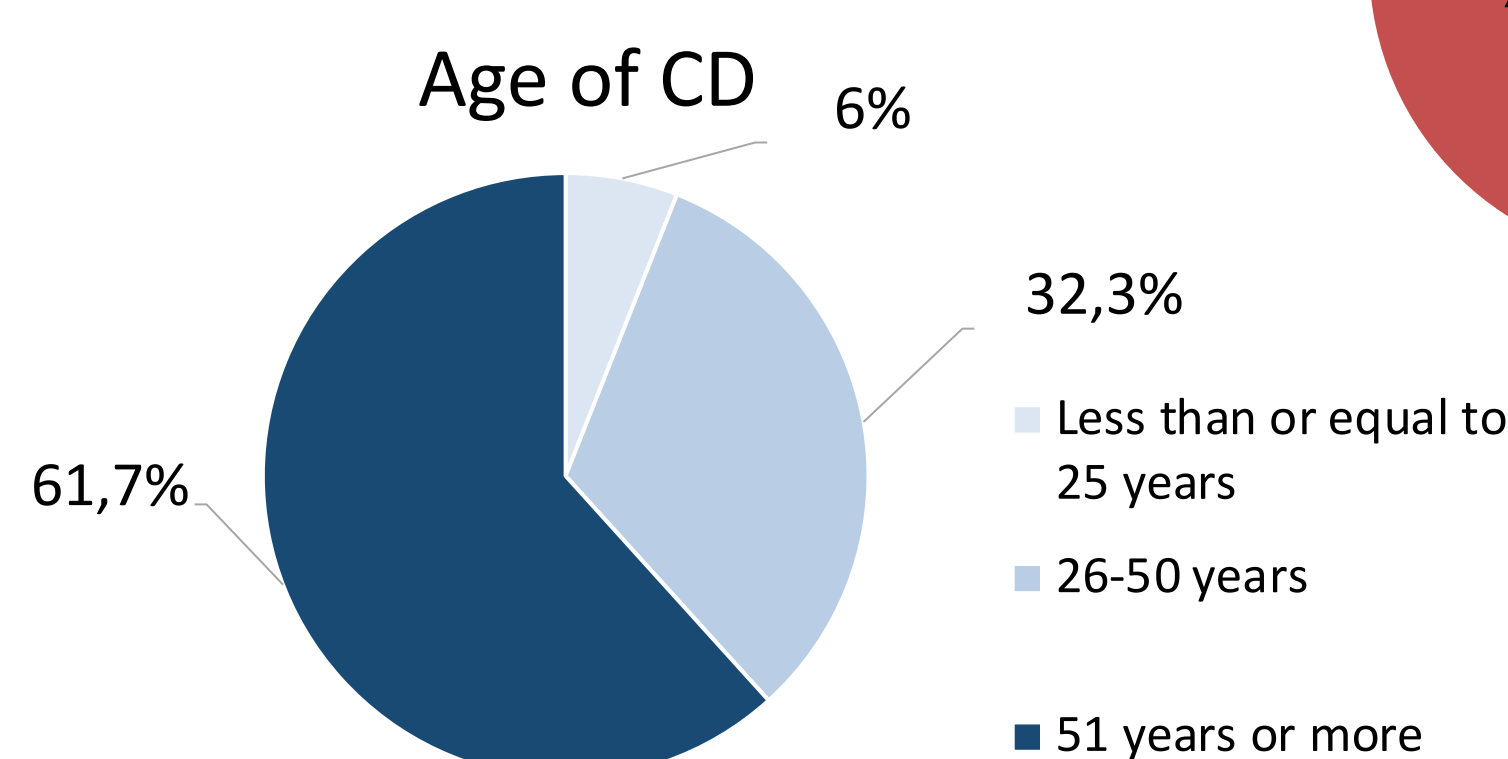
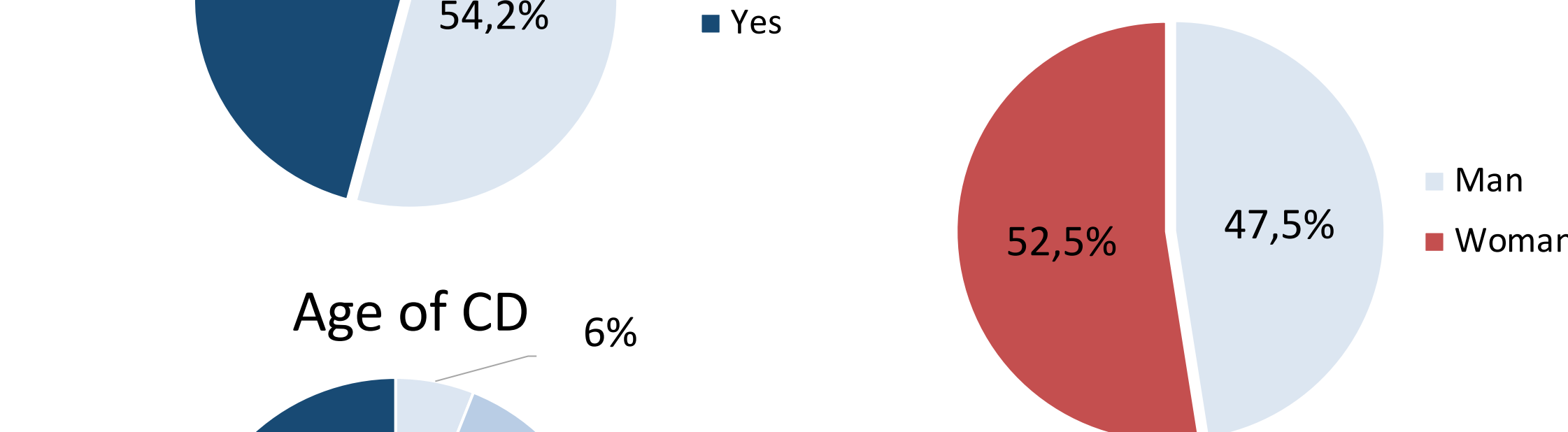
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Results

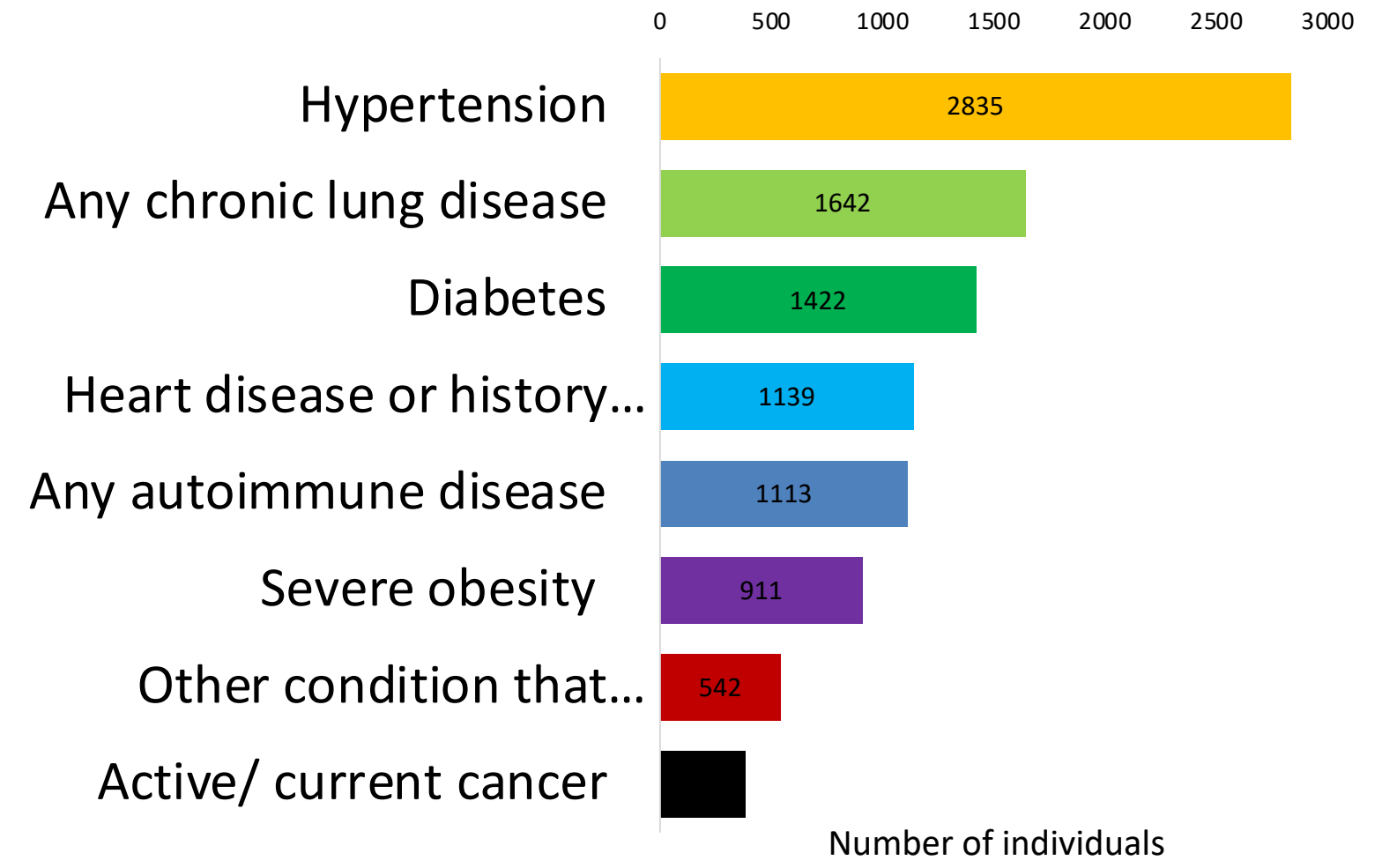
% with Chronic disease (CD) (N=11,540)



Sex of CD (N=5285)



Type of CD (N=5285)



* There's a proportion of individuals that reported comorbidities. That explains why the proportion and number might not exactly add up.

Table 1 : Sex differences in COVID-19 impacts in those with CD

		CD		
		Men	Women	p
		%	%	%
Mental health				
Anxious	n=4437	16,22	28,12	<0.0001*
Depressed	n=4444	15,02	22,44	0.0074*
Lonely	n=4420	17,25	25,31	0.0025*
Frustrated	n=4425	15,7	21,51	0.0342*
Suspicious and distrustful	n=2176	11,41	15,92	0.1978
Health behaviours				
Less active	n=3117	39,86	44,59	0.1438
Worse diet	n=3302	19,98	25,88	0.0691
More alcohol	n=2289	27,37	25,47	0.0722
Access to care				
I cancelled medical appointments or didn't present to the ER	n=3971	15,55	20,92	0.0313*
I had trouble getting access to non-COVID care	n=3949	12,8	14,27	0.9023

Figure 1 : Mental health impacts by sex and health condition

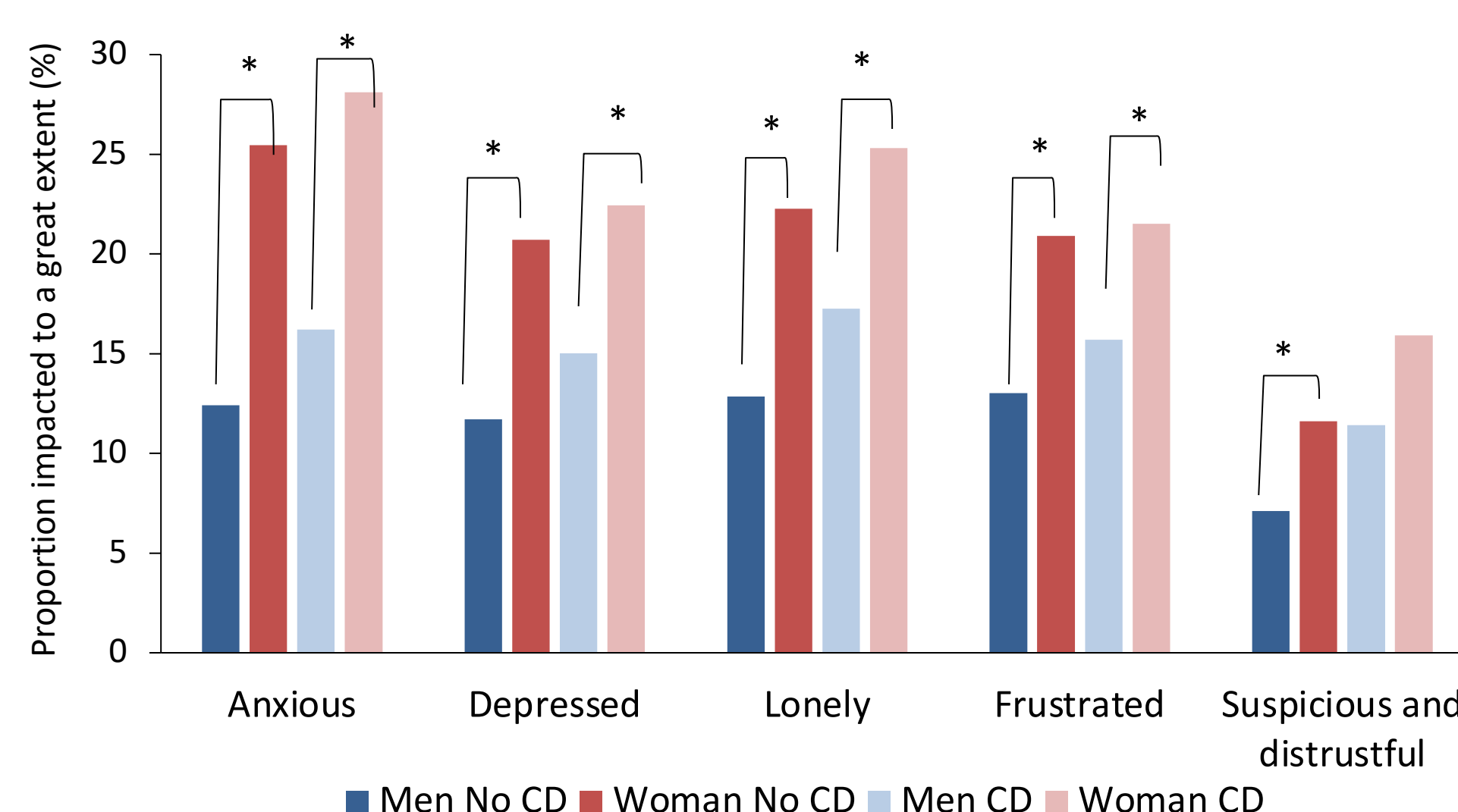


Figure 2 : Health behaviours impacts by sex and health condition

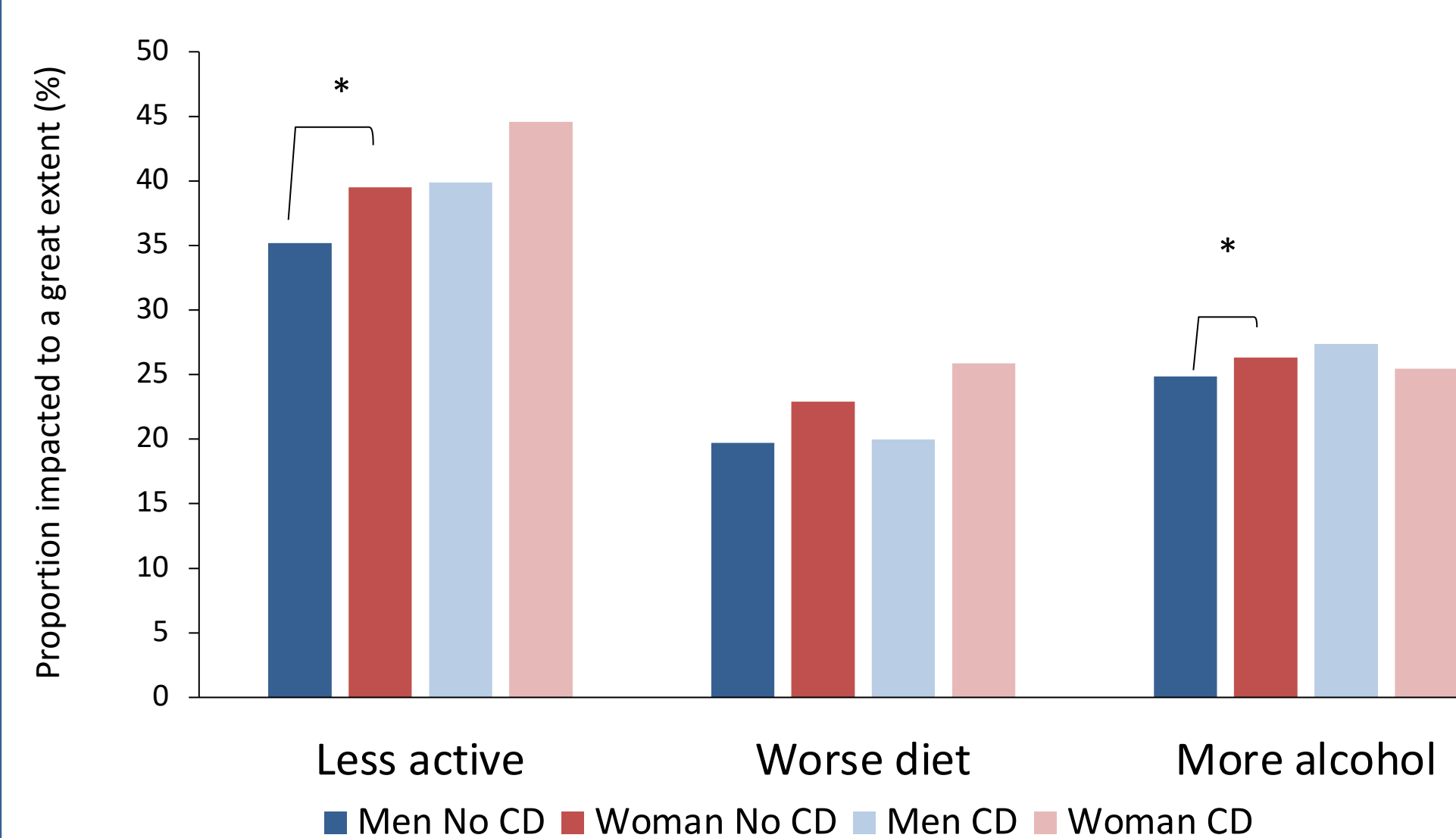
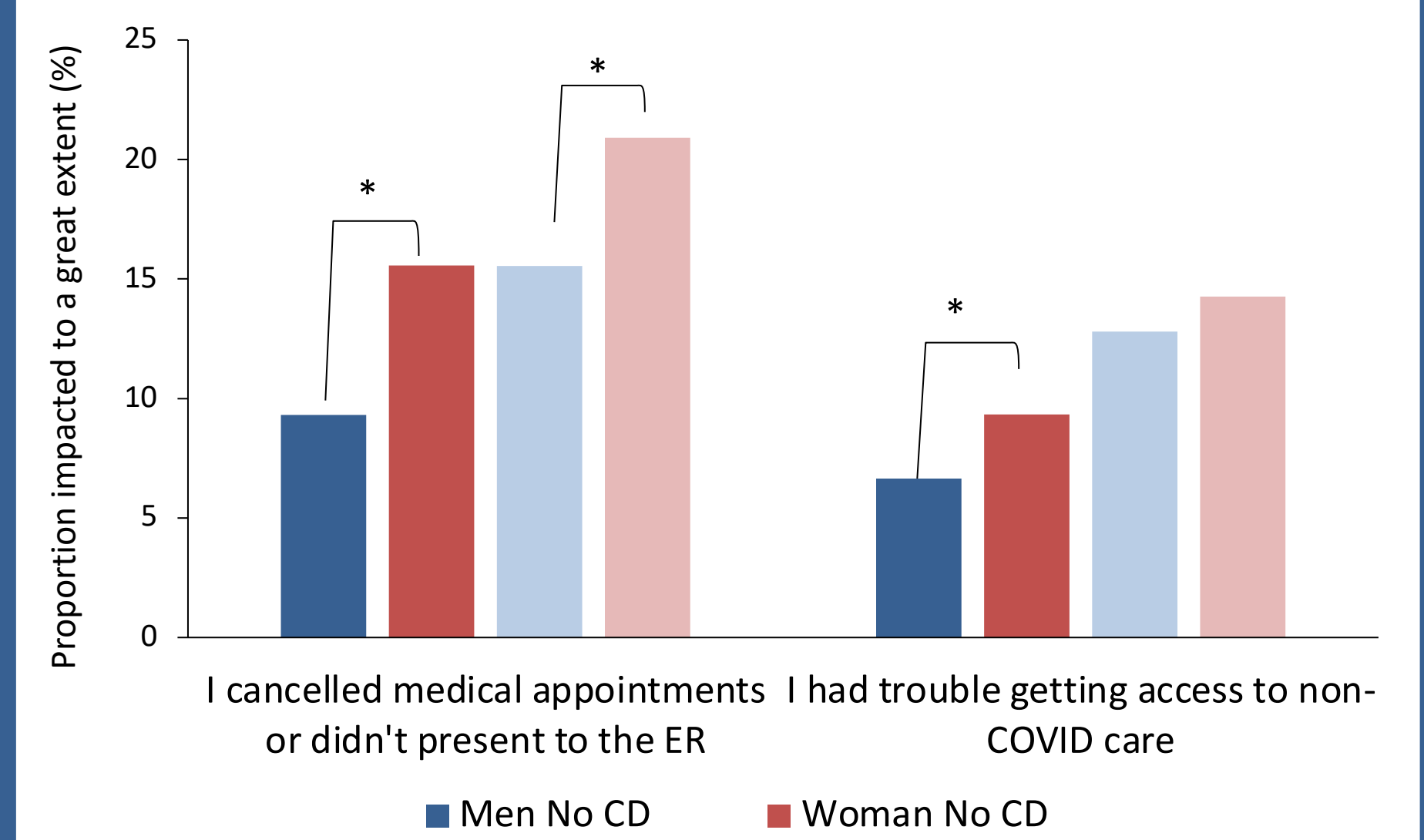


Figure 3 : Access to care impacts by sex and health condition



Discussion

- Results suggests that women with a CD have been more negatively impacted by the pandemic compared to men with a CD.
 - They are suffering from worse mental health (anxiety, depression, isolation, etc.) and have had worse access to medical care compared to men with a CD. But, there was no differences in the impact of health behaviours.
 - Results could be explained by the fact that women are at greater risk for mental health problems, have social roles (e.g: childcare and elder care) that may exaggerate their burden
- Although, the interaction of sex and CD in the model wasn't significant for all of the areas of impacts (e.g. mental health, health behaviours, access to care). This would suggest that women with CD are equally impacted compared to women in general.
- That being said, the consequences of the COVID-19 are greater for the women with CD since they could affect the outcome of their CD and worsen their conditions.

Conclusion

- In general, women with CD were equally or more impacted by the pandemic compared to men with CD.
- Overall, results add to the body of literature showing how the pandemic has highlighted important disparities in pandemic impacts in vulnerable groups, suggesting the need for greater support.

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