

Sex and disease: Gene identified that protects men from death when hospitalized with COVID

The finding appears to work only until age 74, but [a new study](#) has identified a gene variant that protects men from severe illness and death when COVID-19 lands them in the hospital.

The protective gene appears to help tamp down inflammation, researchers say. It is an interleukin-1 receptor antagonist (1L1RN) variant.

While inflammation is a normal response to infection, if left unchecked, it can damage tissues as part of many diseases, including severe cases of COVID-19.

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The study found that 124 men (aged 19-74) who had the gene variant were 80% less likely to die from COVID. They were also less likely to become severely ill after being hospitalized with the virus.

Researchers from NYU Grossman School of Medicine called their findings noteworthy because more men than women die from COVID-19. The gene variant appears to protect only men up to about age 74, but not beyond that as the chronic illnesses of aging take hold, they said.

[**This is an excerpt. Read the full article here**](#)