

Love thy neighbor, reduce heart ailments: Study

31 August 2014 | News | By BioSpectrum Bureau

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Living in a community filled with love and harmony can contribute to the health of your heart, claim scientists. A study published in the *Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health* indicate that having good neighbors and feeling connected to others in the local community could significantly reduce the risks of heart attacks.

The research conducted by the University of Michigan on 5,276 people above 50 years of age, elaborated that those with the highest neighborly scores could reduce their risk of a heart attack by up to 70 percent. During the four year monitoring period, 148 of the 5,276 participants (66 women and 82 men) had a heart attack.

In the study published in the *Journal Epidemiology and Community Health*, the participants, whose average age was 70, were asked to describe their neighborhood. The participants were asked to award points about their neighborhood on the seven point scale.

The survey included questions like how much they felt a part of the community, whether there would be lots of people to help them if they were in trouble, how much they trusted people in their area and how friendly their neighbors were. The team found that for every point they had awarded out of seven, an individual had a 17 percent reduced heart attack risk over the four-year study period.