

Gender Differences in Health Status Among Opiate Users in a 25-Year Follow-up Study

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Study Design

- Original study examined effects of closure of methadone clinics on clients (McGlothlin & Anglin, 1981; Anglin et al., 1979)
- Clients were sampled in 1978-80 from methadone clinics in 6 counties in Central & Southern California
- All clients are being contacted for a 25-year follow-up study

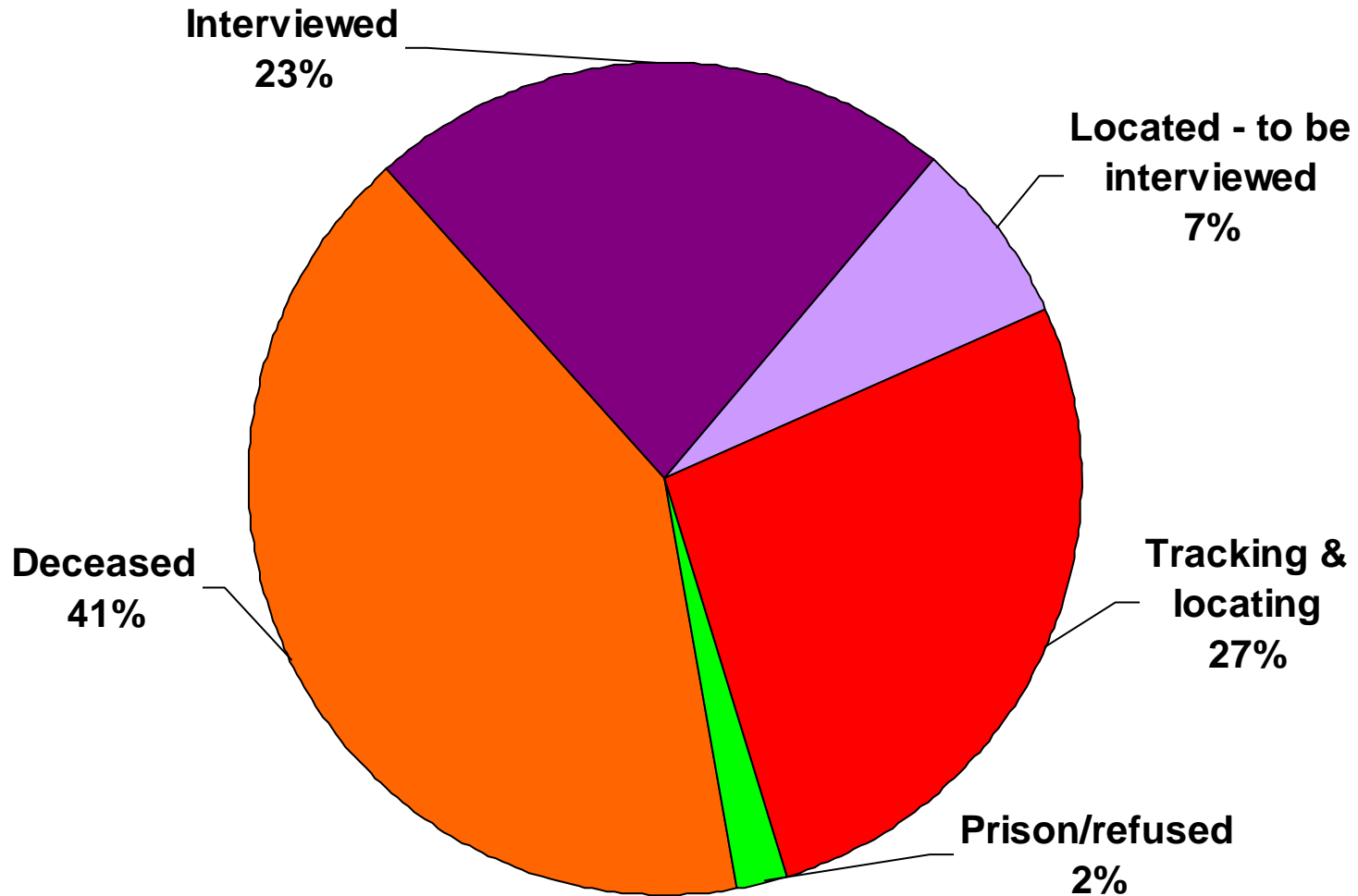
Client Characteristics at Baseline

(N=914)

- ▶ 63% male, 37% female
- ▶ 65% non-Hispanic white, 32% Hispanic, 3% African-American
- ▶ Average age:
 - males, 35.4 years
 - females, 30.2 years

Current Status of Study Sample

(N = 914)

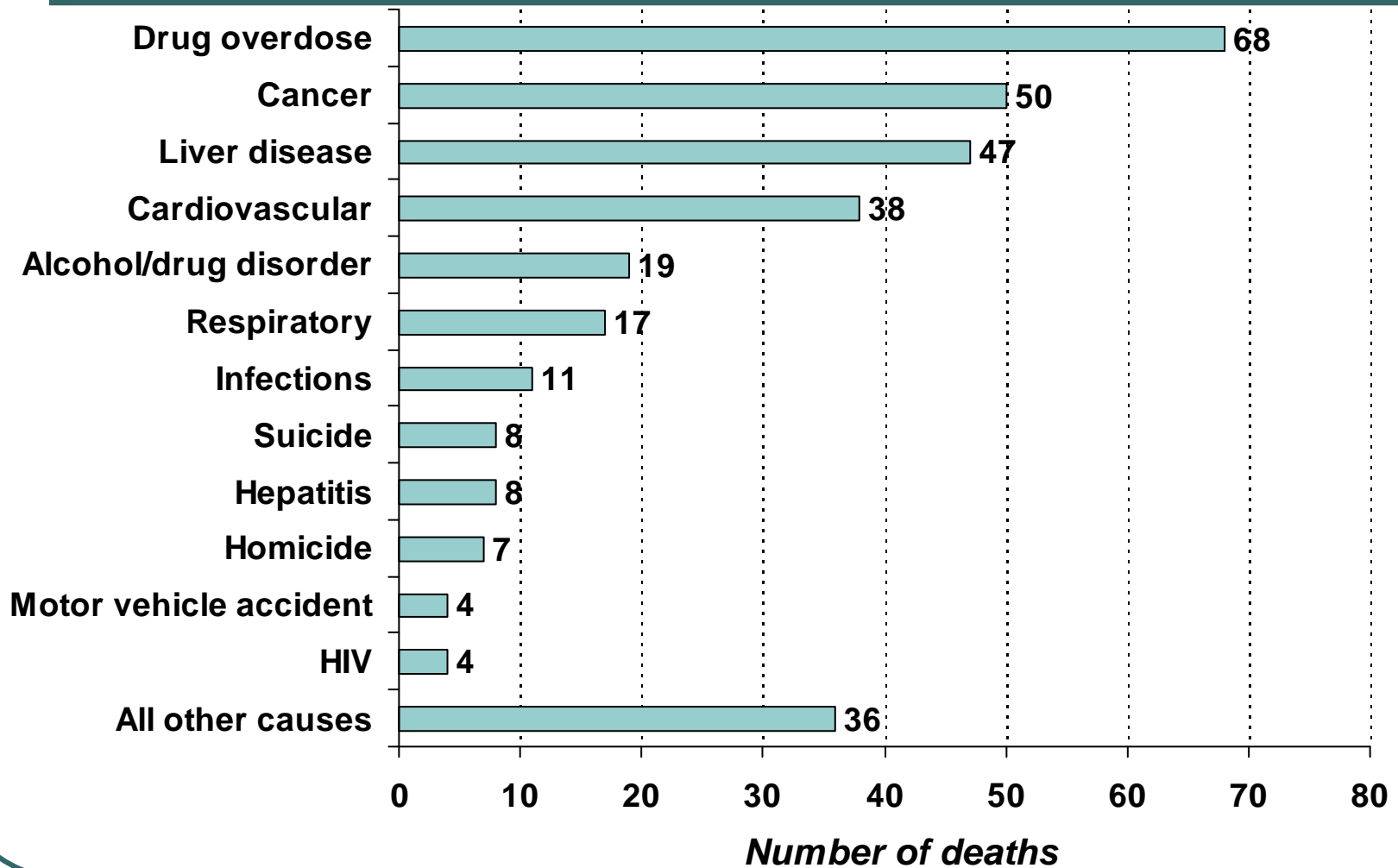


Topics

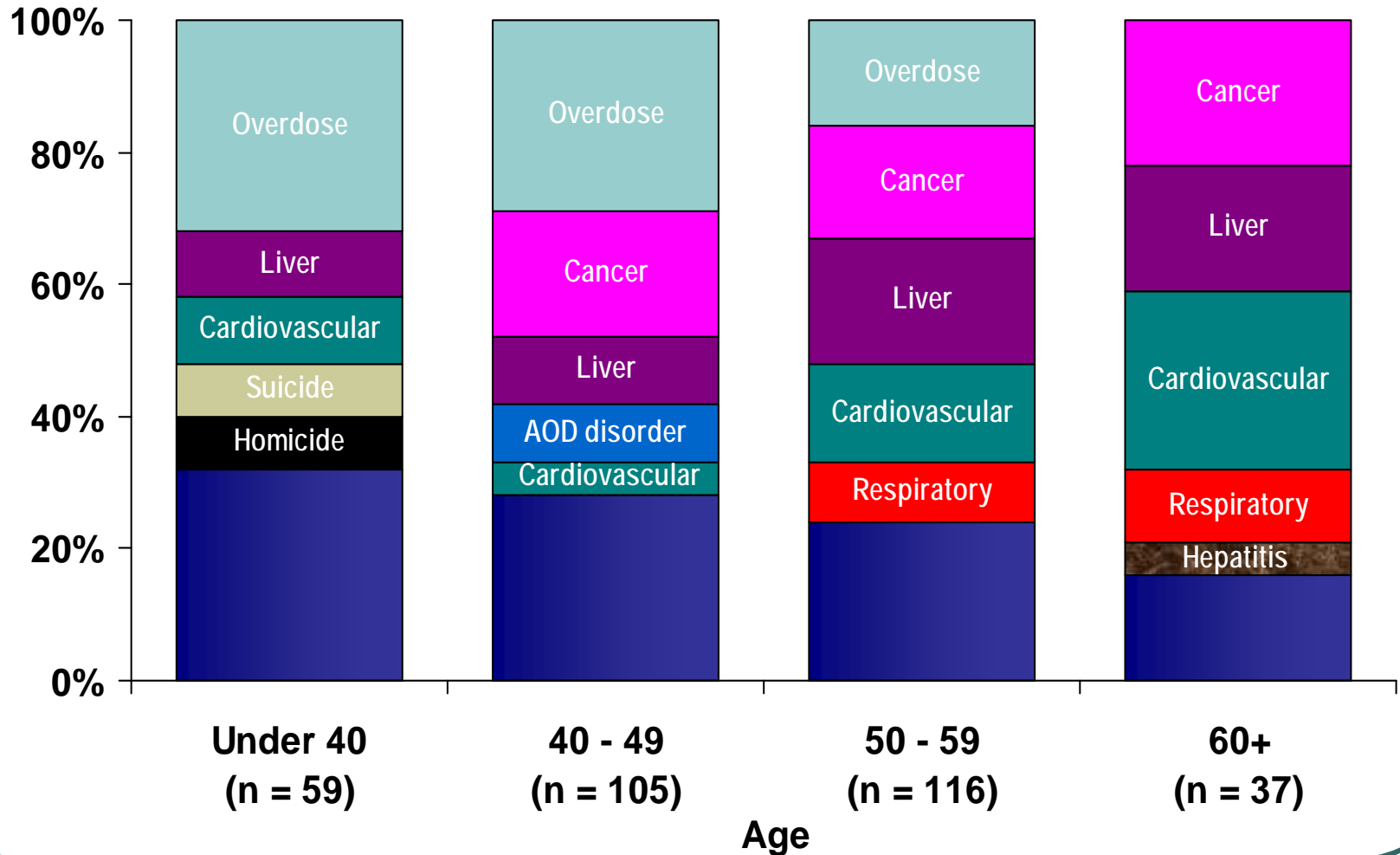
- Gender differences in mortality
- Health status of study sample compared with general population
- Gender differences in drug use and health status
- A note on alcohol use

Primary Causes of Death

(N = 317)



Top 5 Causes of Death by Age Group



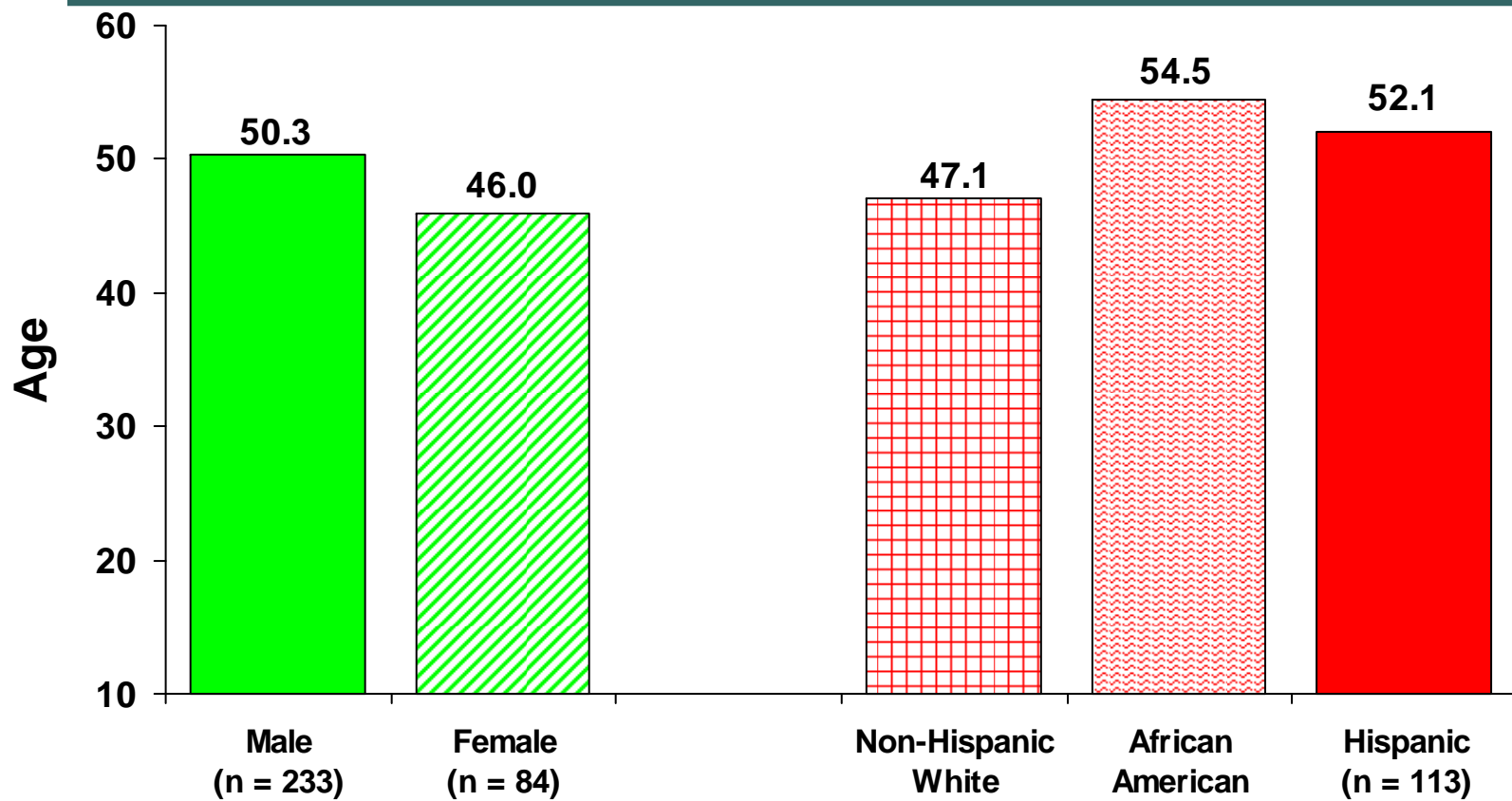
Causes of Death by Gender, Ethnicity

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
1	Overdose	Overdose
2	Liver	Cancer
3	Cancer	Liver
4	Cardiovascular	Respiratory
5	AOD disorder	AOD disorder/infection

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Non-Hisp White</u>	<u>Af-American</u>	<u>Hispanic</u>
1	Overdose	Cancer	Liver
2	Cancer	Liver	Overdose
3	Liver	Cardiovascular	Cancer
4	Cardiovascular		Cardiovascular
5	AOD disorder		Respiratory

Gender, ethnic differences are NS

Average Age at Death by Gender, Ethnicity

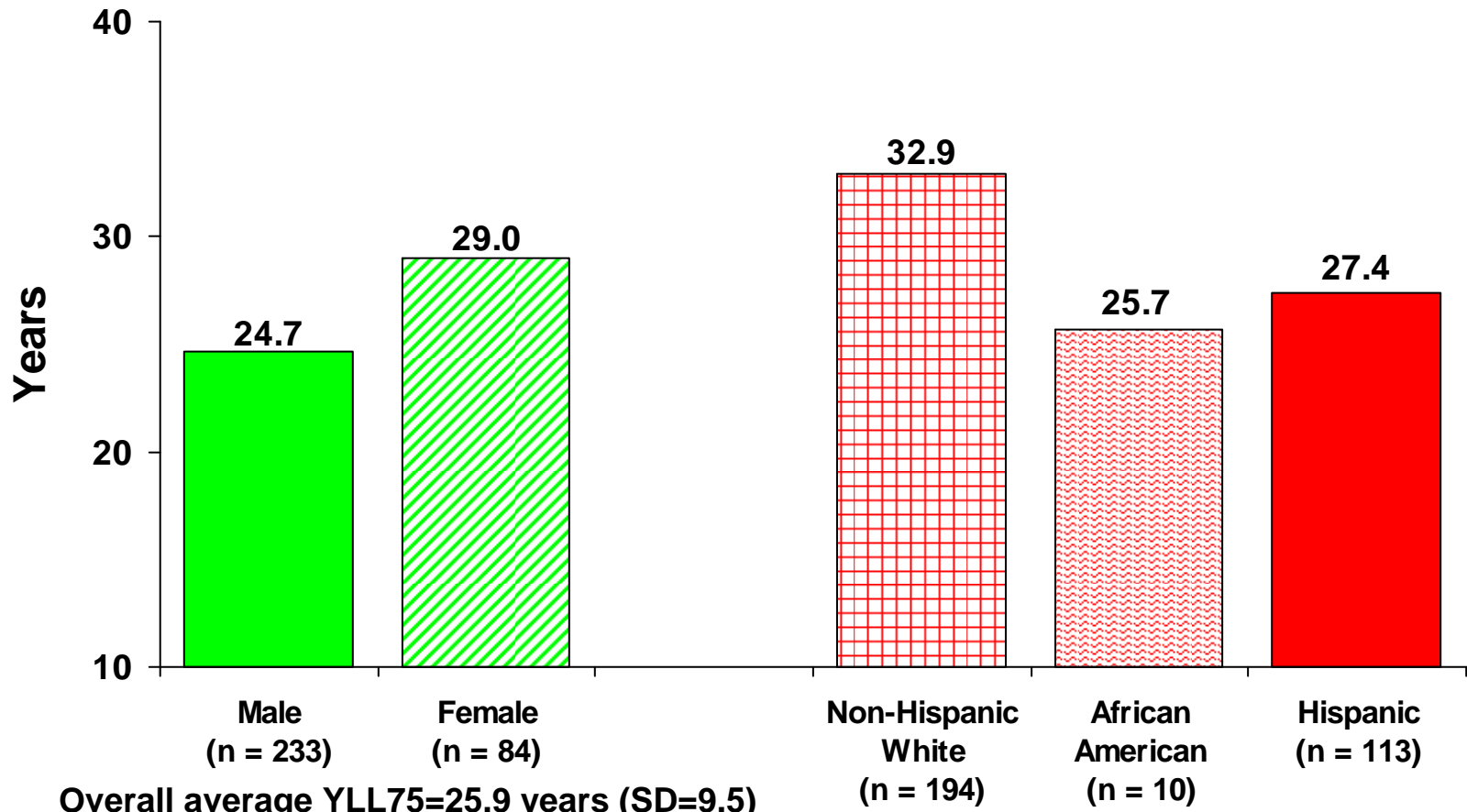


Overall average age at death = 49.1 years (SD=9.5) (n = 194)

Differences by gender and ethnicity (p<.001)

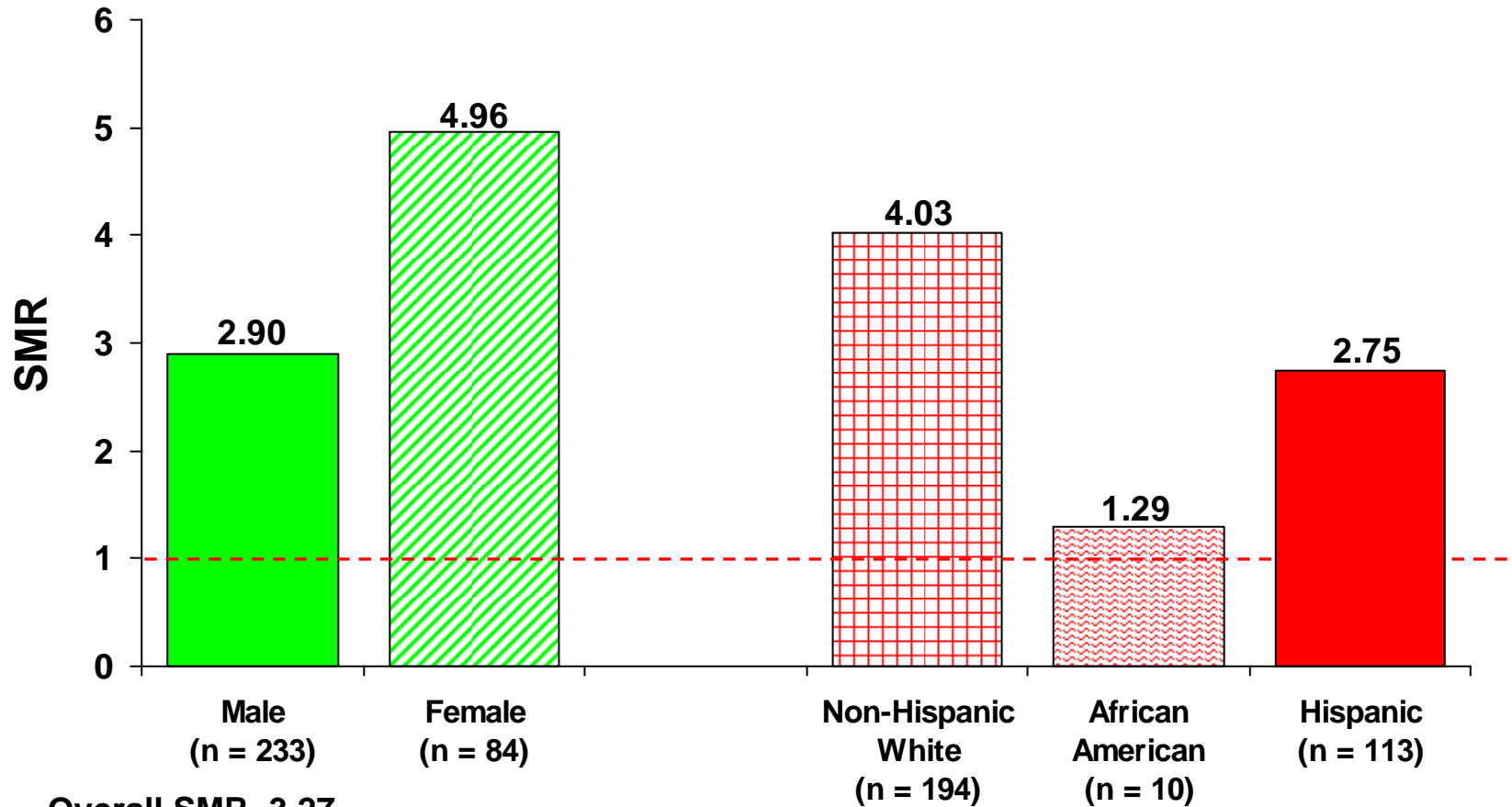
Gender-by-ethnicity interaction is NS

Years of Potential Life Lost Before Age 75 Average per Death by Gender, Ethnicity



Overall average YLL75=25.9 years (SD=9.5)
Differences by gender and ethnicity ($p < .001$)
Gender-by-ethnicity interaction is NS

Standardized Mortality Ratios by Gender, Ethnicity



Overall SMR=3.27

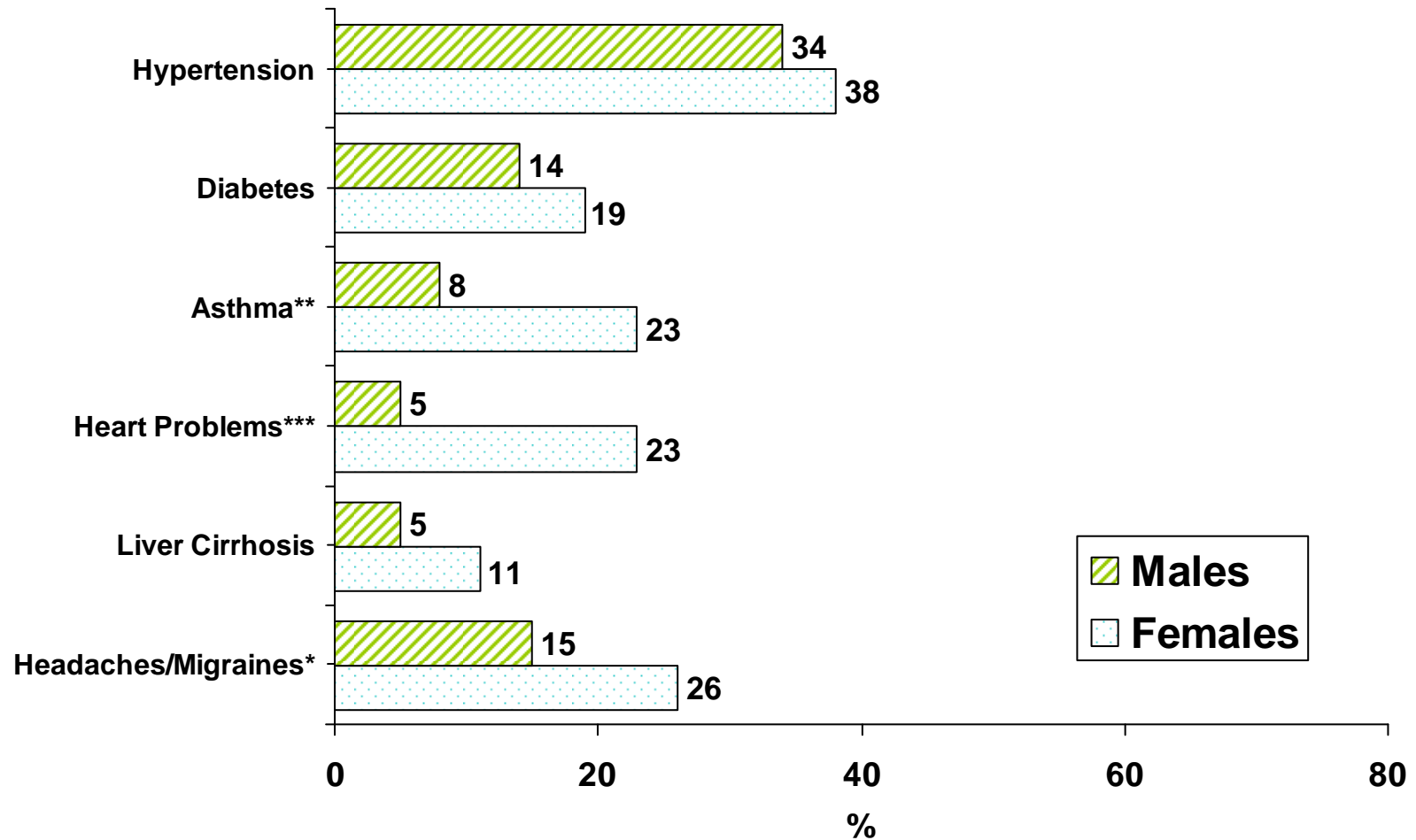
Calculations used 1996 national mortality data adjusted for age group, gender, and ethnicity

Characteristics of Interview Sample

(N = 180)

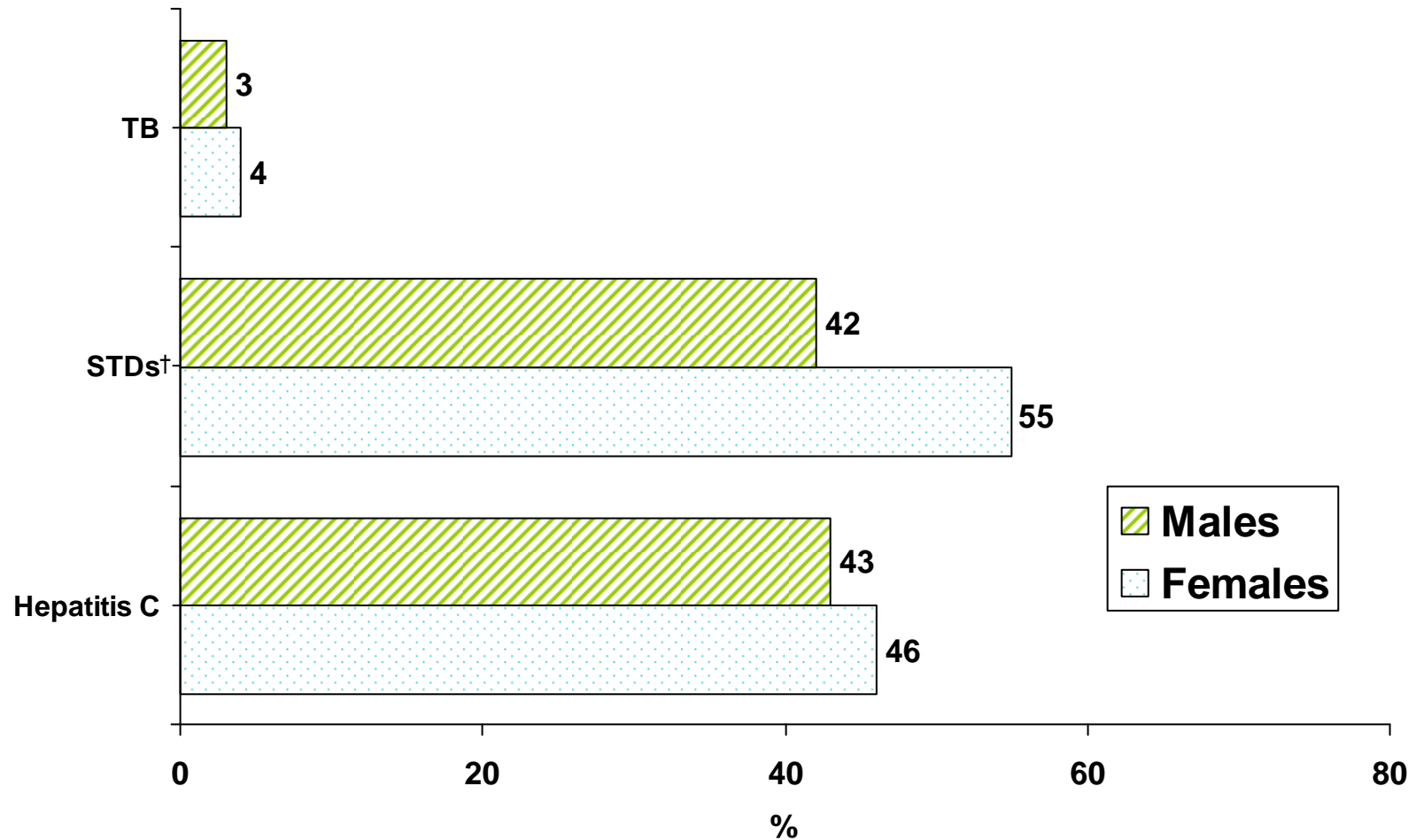
- 53% male, 47% female
- Average age: 58.8 for males, 54.9 for females
- 28% are Hispanic, 2% are African American, 70% are white
- About half (48%) are currently employed
- About one third (34%) are on disability
- Half (51%) of males and 39% of females are currently married
- 34% of males and 39% of females reported illegal drug use in past year

Gender Differences in Chronic Health Problems



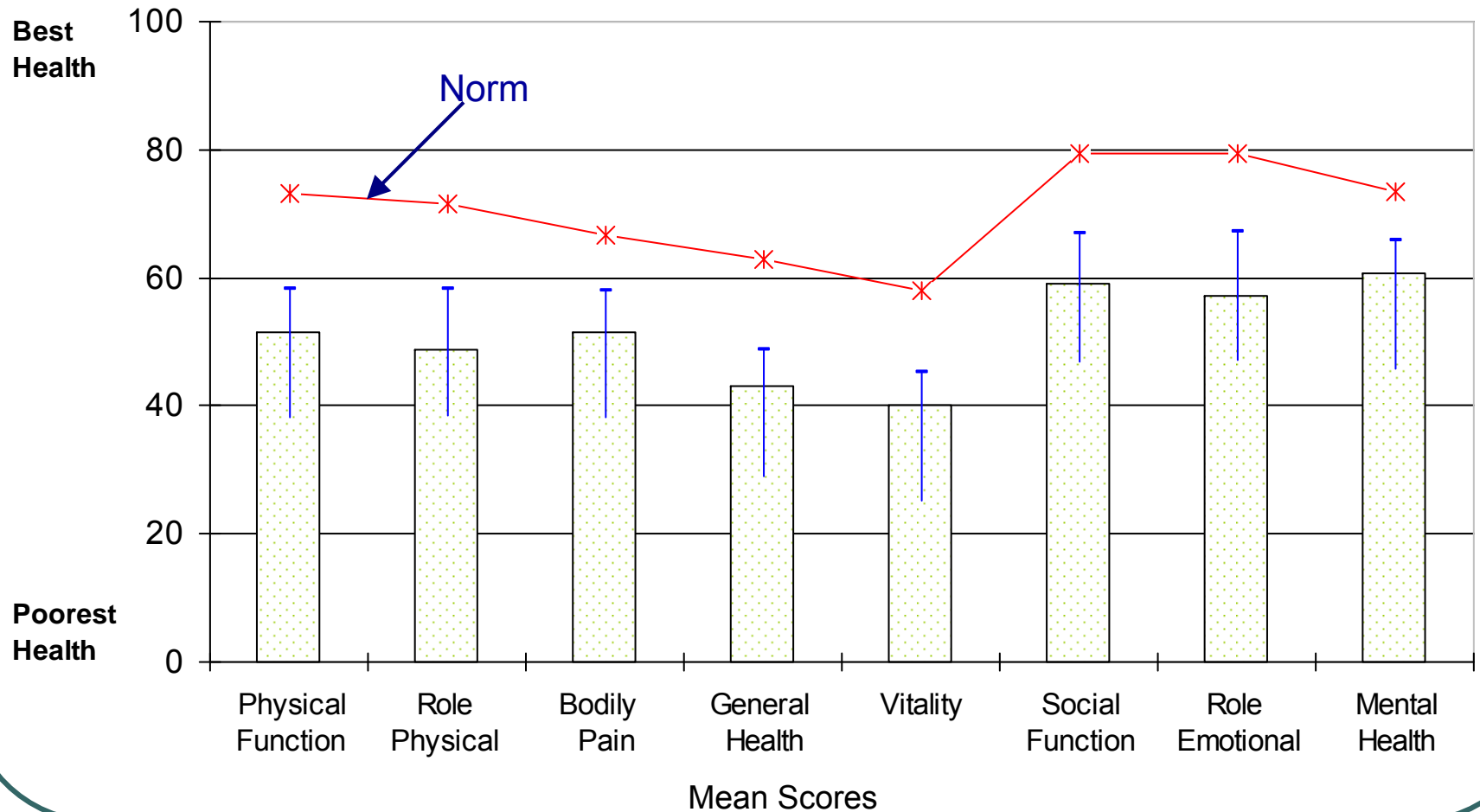
*p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001

Gender Differences in Infectious Diseases (Ever)



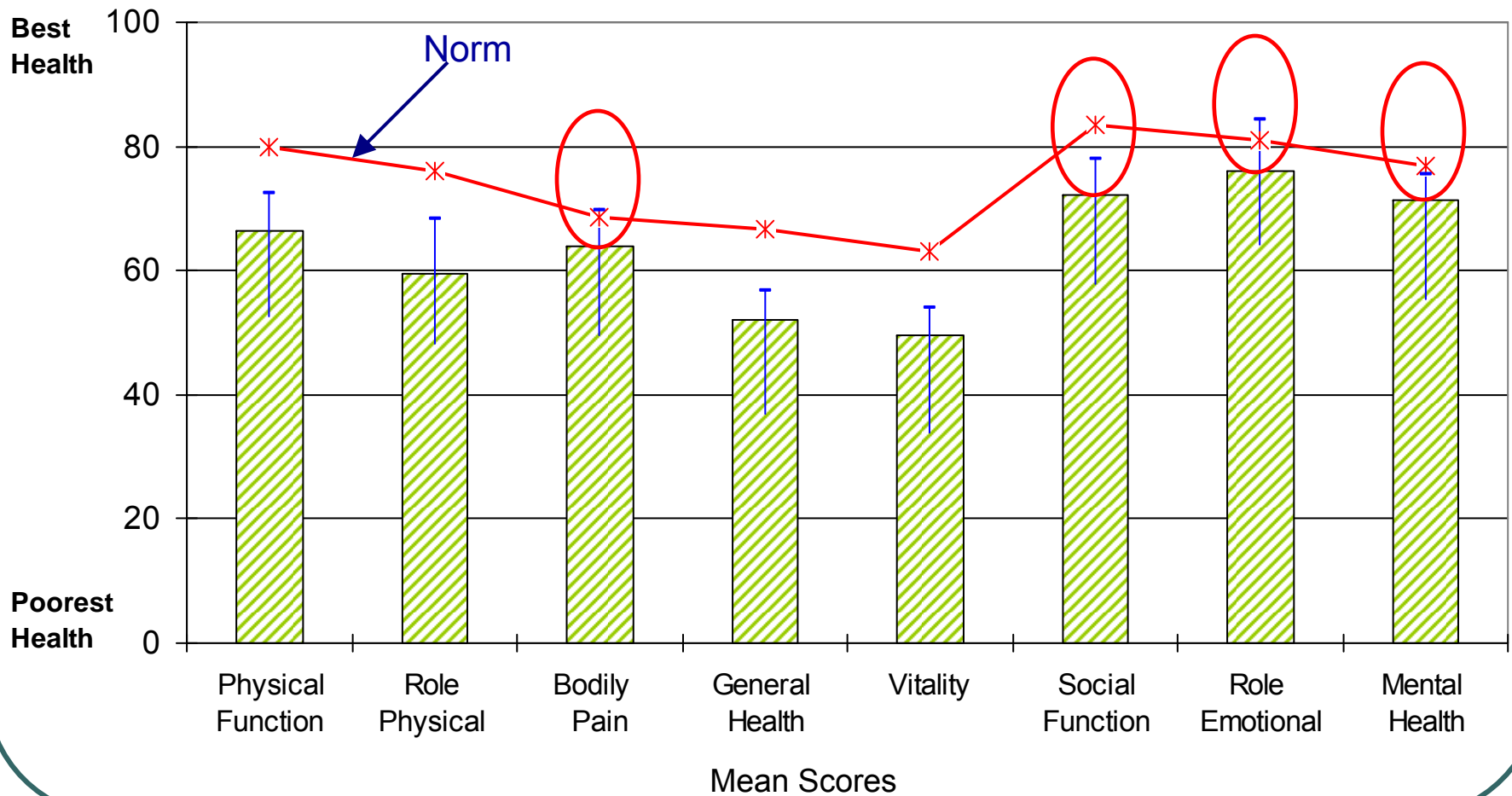
†p < .10

Comparison of Females in Study with Females in General Population on SF-36 Scales¹ (N = 84)



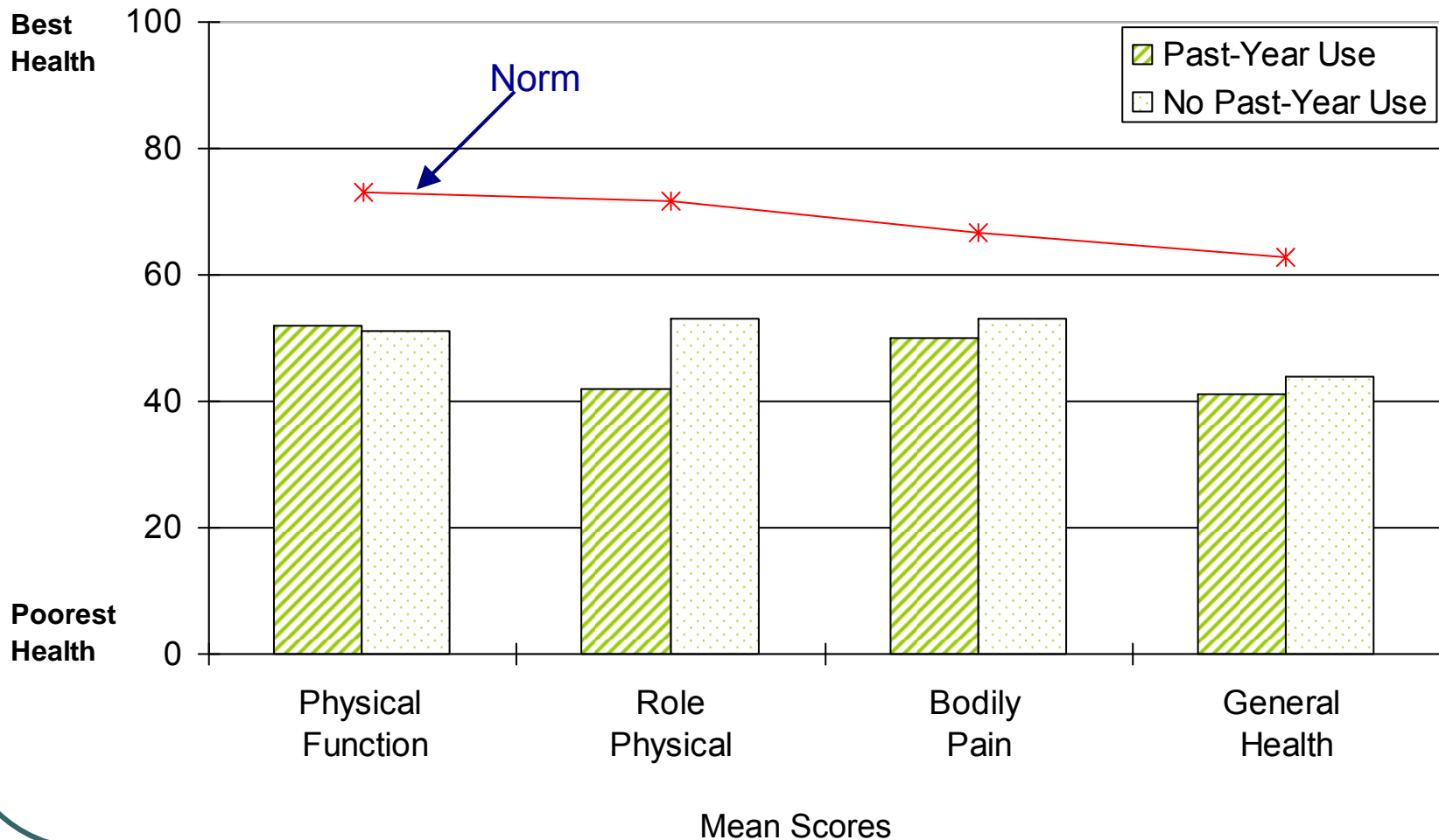
¹Norms are for females aged 55-64 (Ware et al., 1997); 95% confidence intervals for study sample scores

Comparison of Males in Study with Males in General Population on SF-36 Scales¹ (N = 96)

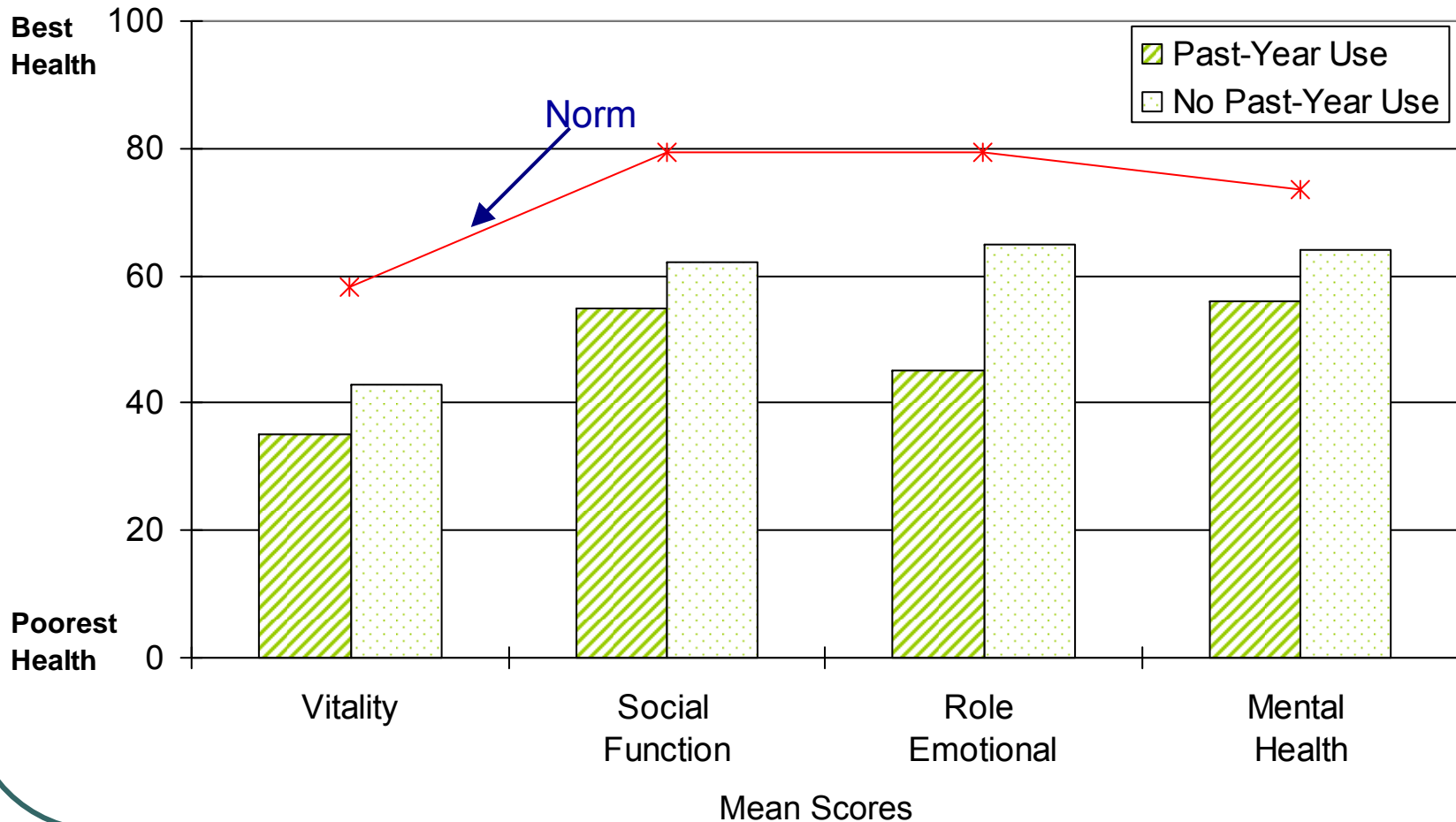


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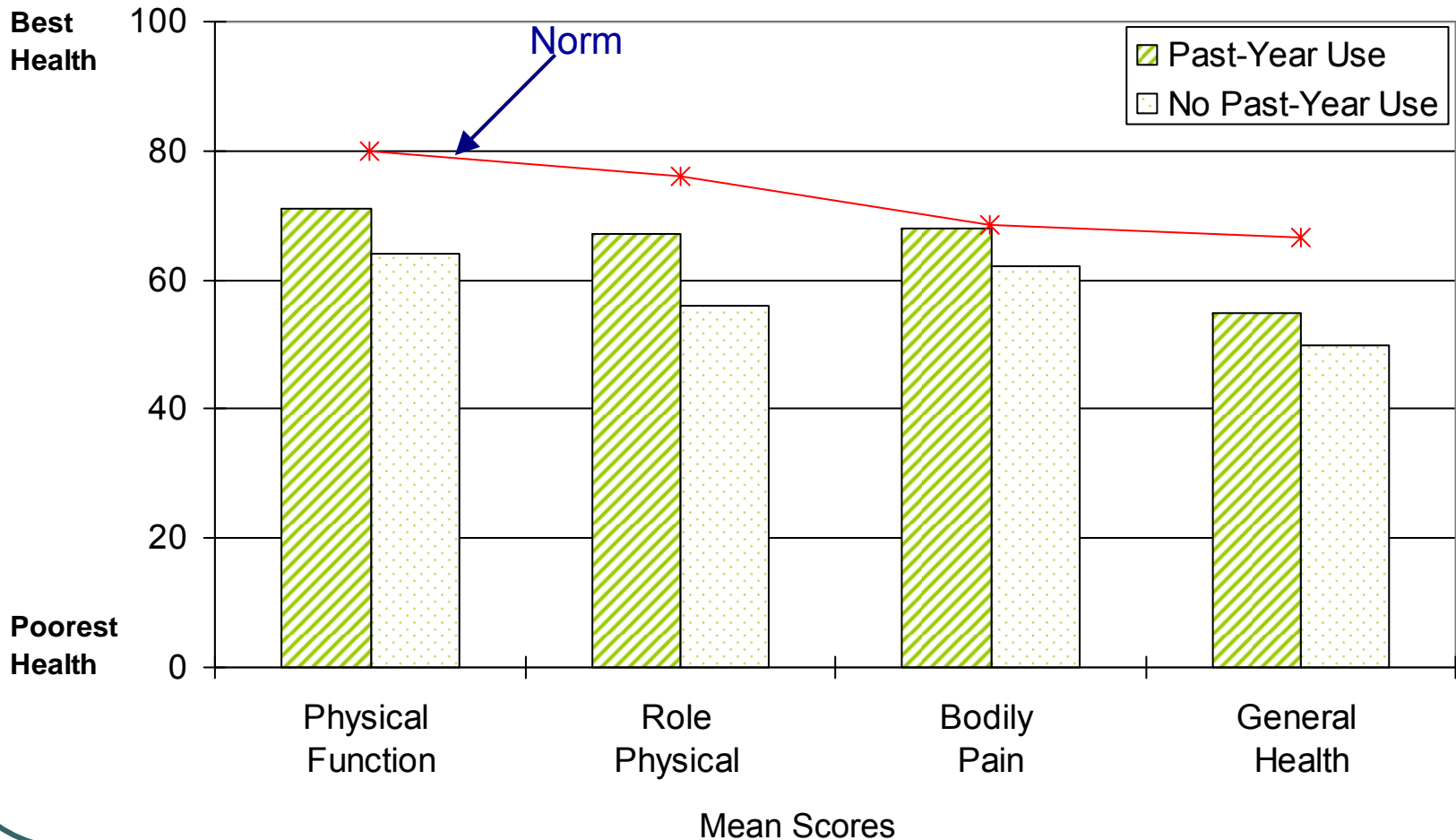
Comparison of Females in Study with Females in General Population on SF-36 Scales by Past-Year Drug Use (N = 84)



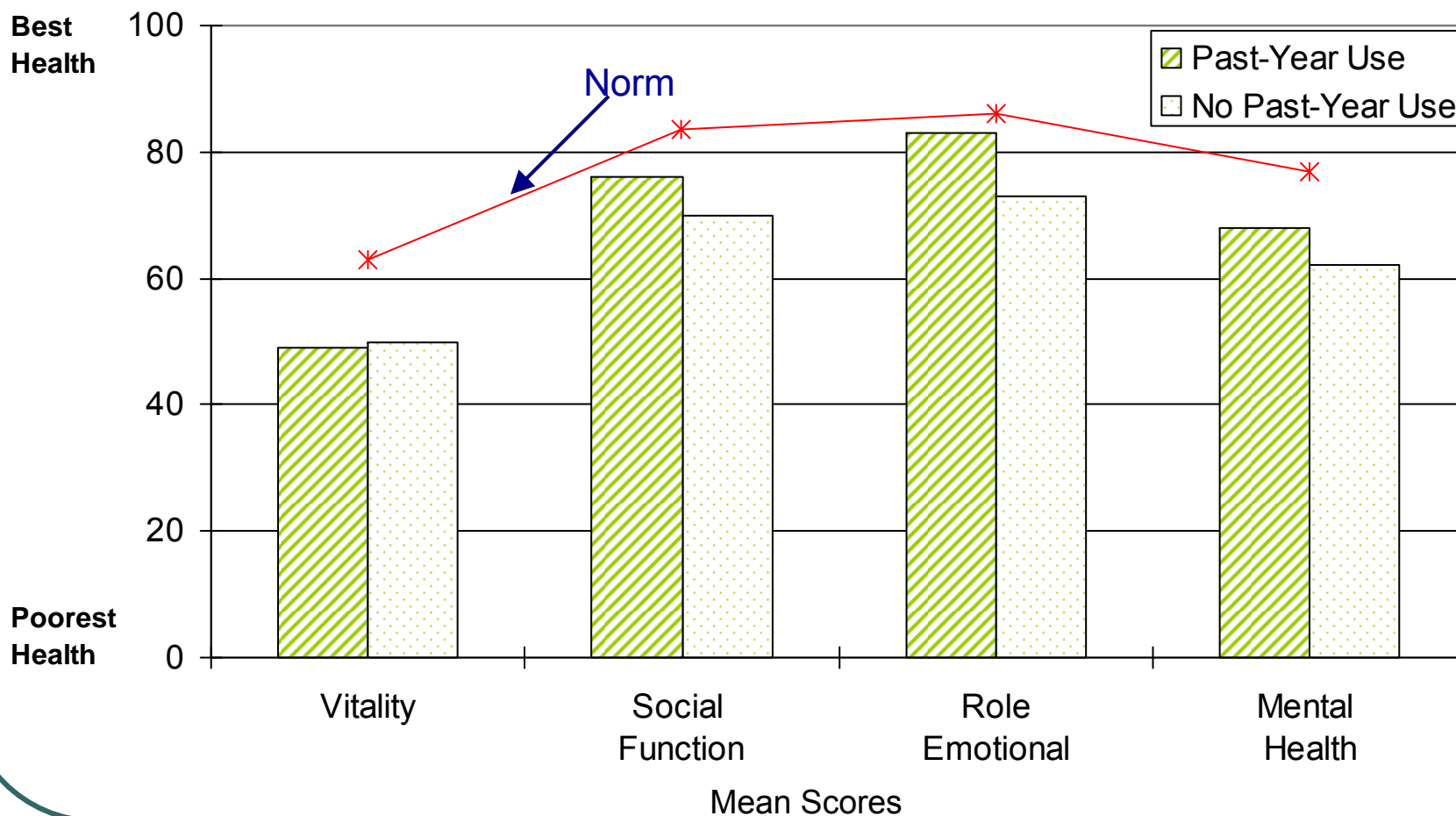
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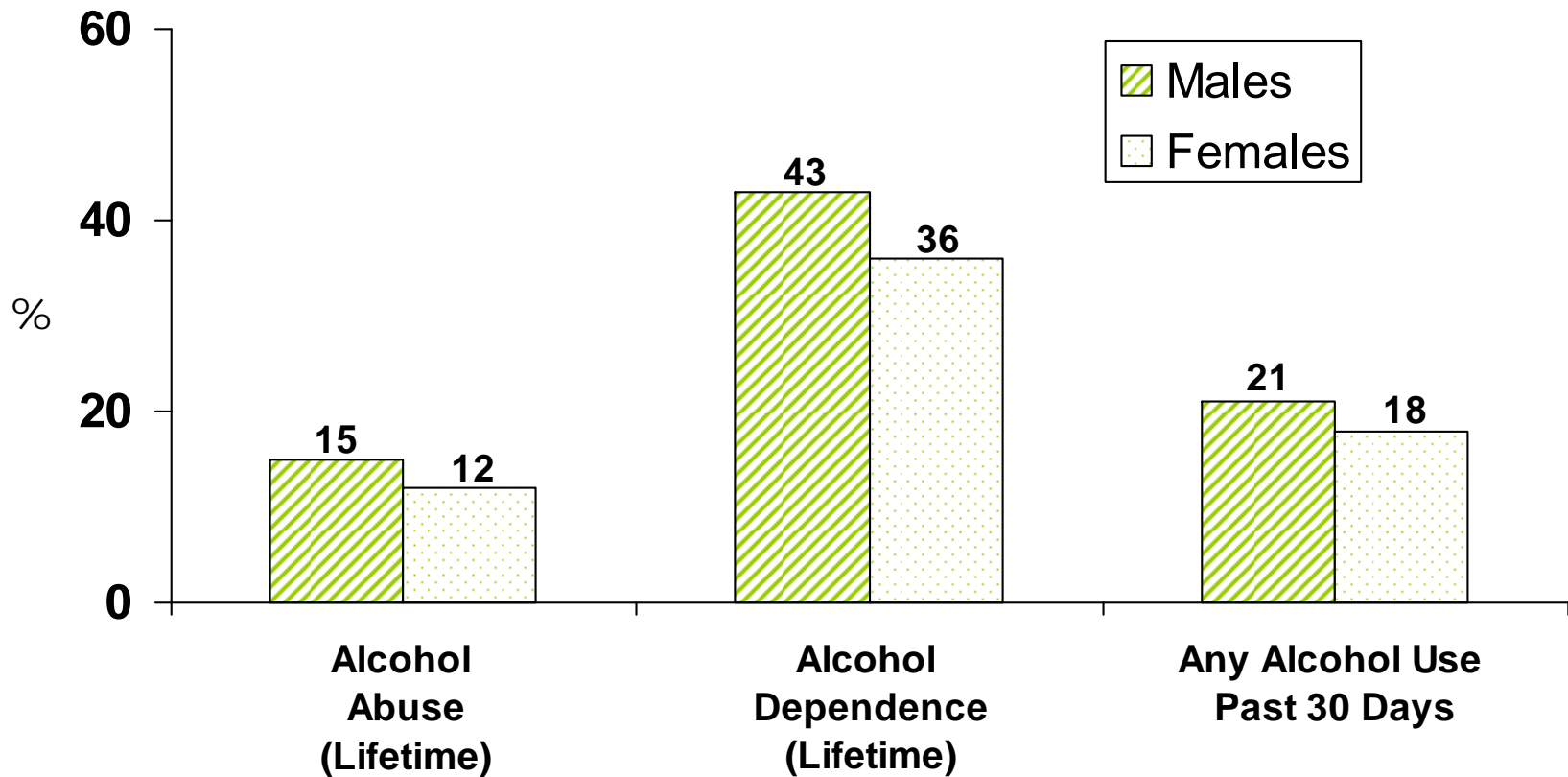


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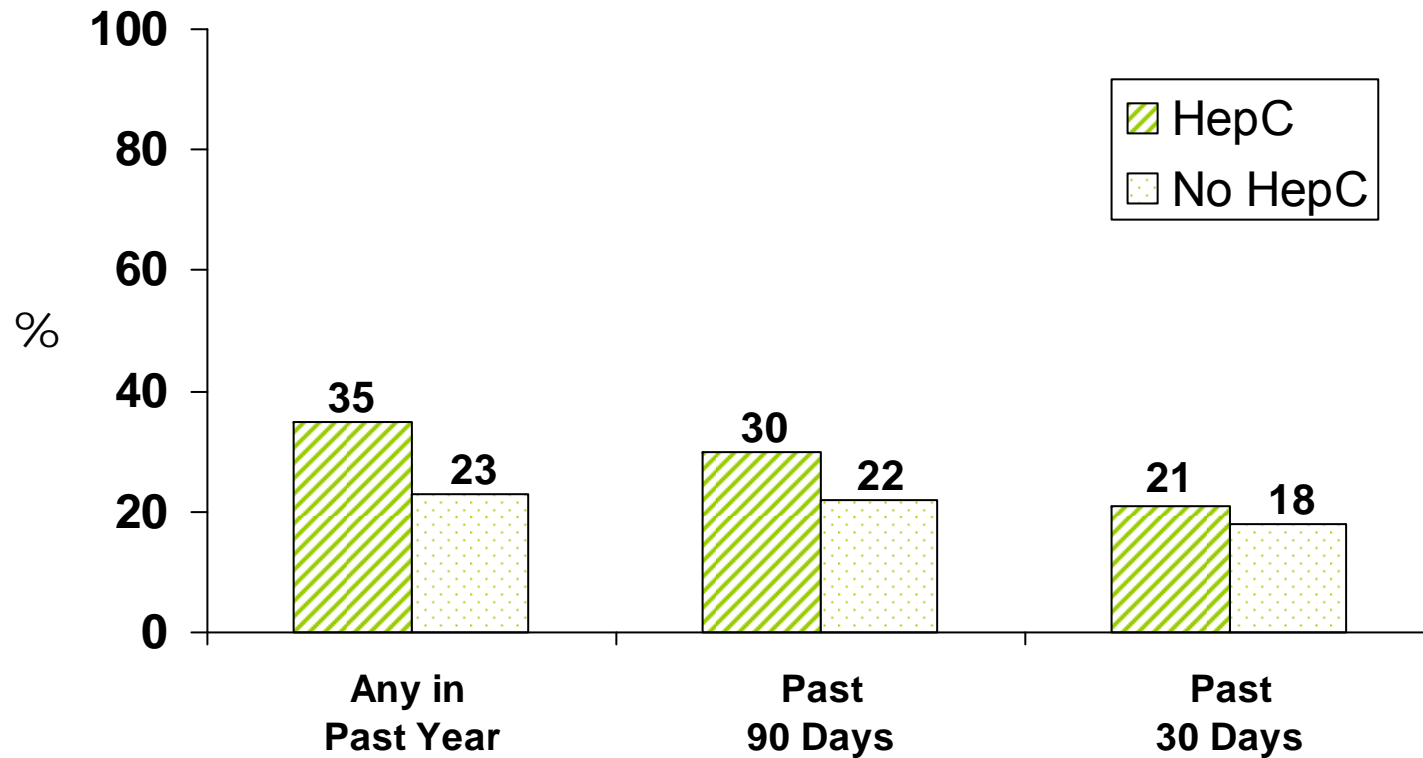


Gender Differences in Alcohol Abuse/Dependence and Current Use

(N = 180)



Alcohol Use and HepC Status



Summary of Findings

- Among the deceased in the original sample:
 - ▶ Women died at an earlier age and had more potential life lost
 - ▶ Both males and females had higher risk of death than general population, although women had higher risk than men (SMR = 5 vs. 3, respectively)
- Among those interviewed for the follow-up study:
 - ▶ Women report poorer overall health status and functioning
 - ▶ About 40% report past-year drug use, with no significant gender difference

Summary of Findings

- ▶ Both males & females in the study had poorer health status compared with their counterparts in the general population
- ▶ Among women, past-year drug users had more impaired functioning in several areas compared with non-users
- ▶ Among men, past-year drug users reported better functioning in several areas (e.g., pain, social functioning, emotional health), compared with non-users
- ▶ Alcohol use among those with Hepatitis C emerged as an important area for health services intervention

Limitations

- Findings are preliminary — current sample is about half of the targeted follow-up sample size
- “Survivor bias” — most severe have “self-selected” out of remaining sample
- Health status is based on self-report and not verified by clinical diagnosis