

Community-based studies of Middle Easterners point to significant health problems among the immigrants, a finding that runs contrary to theories of immigrant selectivity. Whether or how these patterns vary for immigrant men and women has received much less attention, which is surprising given that migration and settlement processes differ for Middle Eastern men and women suggesting that the theories and concepts historically used to explain the health of immigrant men (e.g. selectivity, health behaviors, etc.) may be less useful for understanding the health profiles and trajectories of immigrant women. This study is the first to use nationally representative data to examine this issue. Using new questions that identify region of birth in the 2000 through 2007 National Health Interview Surveys, we first compare the self-rated health and activity limitation of Middle Eastern immigrant men and women to U.S.-born white Americans to serve as a baseline. We then examine differences between immigrant men and women and test the extent to which social, demographic, and immigrant characteristics account for observed disparities. We conclude by suggesting avenues of future research for understanding how gender might change what we currently know about the health trajectories of emergent immigrant populations such as Middle Easterners.