

The KaHOLO Project

Preventing cardiovascular disease in Native Hawaiians

The KaHOLO Project, showed how new and important discoveries can happen when the knowledge of two areas: western medical science and Hawaiian culture are brought together. Ola Hou I ka Hula (*restore health through hula*) is a six month hula-based high blood pressure management program which was tested over the past 5 years. University scientists, collaborating with kumu hula, and communities proved this program was among the very best non-medication treatment for hypertension. Funded by the prestigious National Heart Lung Blood Institute the study involved 6 community organizations, 10 kumu hula, many University of Hawai'i medical school scientists, and guidance from Kumu hula Mapuana de Silva from the well known Hālau Mōhala 'Ilima.

This randomized clinical trial encompassed eight sites across three islands with a total of 784 hula classes and 263 participants. The KaHOLO Project involved the most number of Hawaiians in a research study ever undertaken to evaluate a health program. Study participants were under physician care for hypertension and still struggled to keep good blood pressure management. Many also had high cholesterol, and diabetes. All of these factors put them at high risk for heart disease. Ola Hou included six months of hula classes, heart health management education with the ultimate goal of improving blood pressure and engaging in Hawaiian culture. Overall, Ola Hou was able to help participants reduce their systolic blood pressure an average of 17 mmHg.

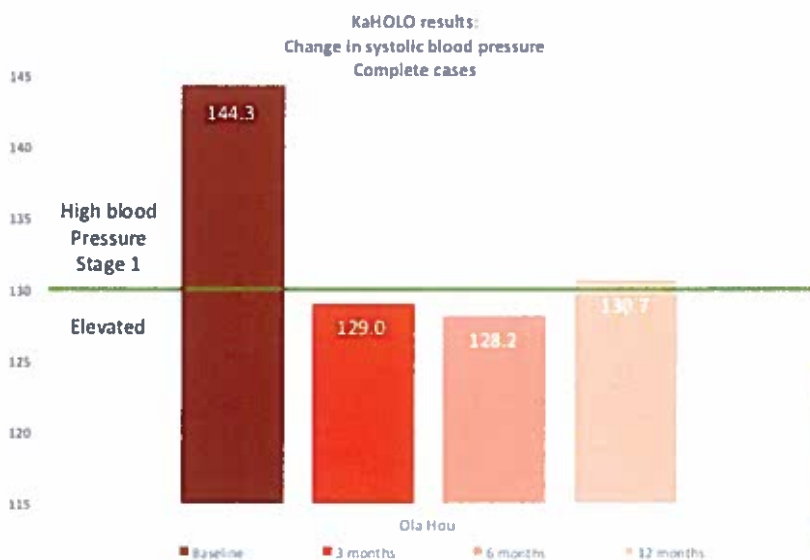


Study highlights

- Those who practiced hula lowered their blood pressure much more than those who only had education.
- Very strong improvement in systolic blood pressure a 17 mmHg drop. And improvements held even after program ended.
- Reduced the 10 year risk of getting heart disease.
- Largest study of health treatment with Hawaiians ever done.

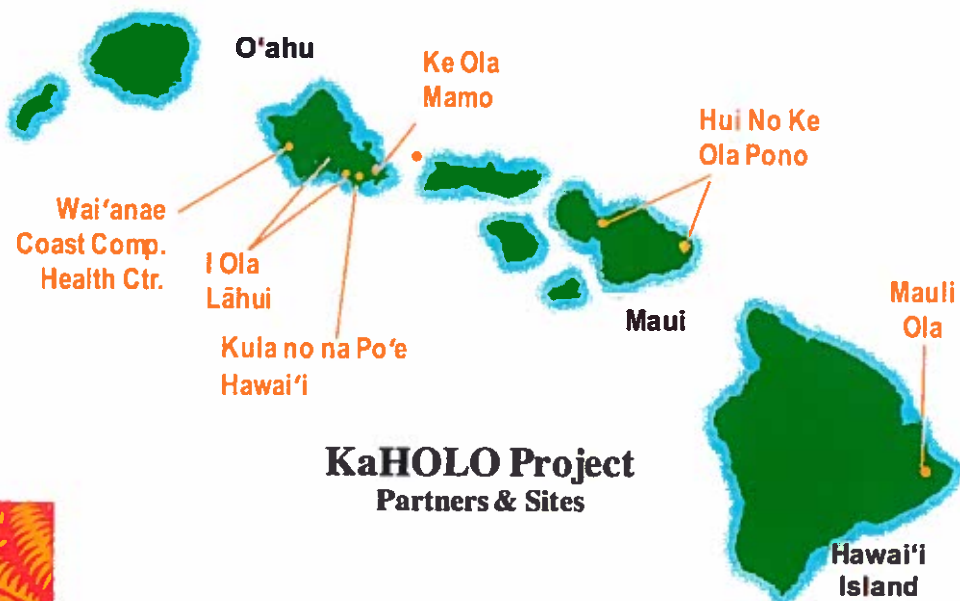
This amount of drop reduces the risk of heart attack, stroke, and heart failure. In addition, Ola Hou participants were able to sustain their improvements in blood pressure six months after their classes ended. The success of the program wasn't only in the reduction of blood pressure. The hard work of all the participants in getting healthy also lowered their risk of developing heart disease in the next 10 years.

"I love this class. It's me time. At home I'm so focused on taking care of everybody else that I don't have time for me. I am now focusing on myself and my health" -- Ola Hou participant



Mahalo nui to the following organizations and individuals

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