Background: Cuban immigrants who arrived in 1980 or later were differently received upon arrival in the U.S. than earlier Cuban emigrés and appear to be relatively disadvantaged in a range of outcomes. Later arrivals may therefore demonstrate worse mental health and psychosocial adjustment; a disadvantage that may be accounted for in part by experiences of adversity, availability of protective resources, or acculturation.

Method: Employing OLS models, we compare Cuban immigrants arriving in the U.S. prior to 1980 with those arriving during or after 1980 in levels of depression, anxiety, and self-esteem and test whether adversity, social identities, social support, pre-migration factors, or acculturation attenuate any migration group differences in health and adjustment in a sample of adults in South Florida (N=191).

Results: Analyses reveal that later arrivals are relatively disadvantaged in all three outcomes. While later arrivals have similar experiences of adversity as earlier arrivals, they are relatively disadvantaged in protective resources to offset any adversity experienced and are less acculturated. Later arrivals report having a strong American identity less often, perceive lower levels of social support, were more often interviewed in Spanish, and more often migrated as adults. Observed disadvantages in health and adjustment among the later arrivals are best explained by strength of American identity, perceived family support, language of interview, and age at migration, though degree of attenuation varies by outcome.

Conclusions: A complex, and likely inter-related, set of factors differentiate the health of earlier and later arriving Cuban immigrants in South Florida.