



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF JUVENILE JUSTICE
OFFICE OF HEALTH SERVICES

EMPLOYEE HEALTH INITIATIVE:
JUNE IS NATIONAL MEN'S HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH



The purpose of National Men's Health Week is to heighten the awareness of preventable health problems and encourage early detection and treatment of disease among men and boys.

MEN'S HEALTH

Did you know that, on average, men are less healthy and have a shorter life expectancy than women? Part of the reason for this health gap is that we don't take care of ourselves as well as women do. Men are more likely to engage in unhealthy behavior, and less likely than women to adopt preventive health measures. Men are less likely to have health insurance, more likely to work in dangerous occupations, and often put off going to the doctor even when we really should go. As a result, men die younger—and in greater numbers—of heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes, and many other diseases. In 1920, women outlived men by an average of one year. Today, that difference is more than five years. More than half of premature deaths among men are preventable. But you can't prevent a problem if you don't know it exists. [Test Your Knowledge on Men's Health](#)

SILENT HEALTH CRISIS

"There is a silent health crisis in America...it's a fact that, on average, American men live sicker and die younger than American women." Dr. David Gremillion, Men's Health Network

RECOGNIZING SYMPTOMS

When a warning light flashes on the car dashboard, most men usually take the car to the shop. But when warning lights flash on their body, most men don't (or won't) notice. Here are a few flashing lights you should look out for:

- ☑ Changes in bowel or bladder habits. This can be an indication of prostate or bladder problems. And blood in the urine is a common indicator of kidney problems. Getting up five times a night to go to the bathroom could be a symptom of an enlarged prostate, a common condition among men as they get older.
- ☑ Impotence or erectile dysfunction. Most of the time, erectile problems are caused by an underlying health problem, such as diabetes, clogged arteries, or high blood pressure.
- ☑ Persistent backaches, changes in the color of urine or stool, obvious changes in warts or moles, unusual lumps, recurrent chest pains or headaches, bleeding that won't stop, nagging cough, unexplained weight loss, and extreme fatigue can all be symptoms of other serious health problems.
- ☑ Depression. Although women are more likely to attempt suicide, men are four times more likely to succeed. Because men are reluctant to ask for help and may try to hide their depression, you may recognize the symptoms sooner than he does. These may include acting overly anxious, having trouble sleeping, complaining of feeling sad or "empty" or helpless, engaging in unusually risky or reckless behavior, or losing interest in hobbies or other pleasurable activities (including sex).

PREVENTION

*Men die younger than women from the top causes of death. As a result, the average woman outlives the average man by over five years. But it doesn't have to be this way. More than half of these premature deaths are preventable, along with about 60 percent of chronic diseases, and most injuries and accidents. By taking charge of your own preventative care, you can protect your health. **Among men, more than one-half of premature deaths are preventable.***

As important as it is for you to take charge of your own health and wellness, you can't do it all. Getting regular checkups and age-appropriate screenings is a proven way to improve health and reduce premature death and disability. Remember, if you're a member of a high-risk group or have a family history of disease, talk to your doctor about the benefits of earlier screenings.





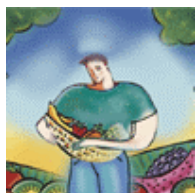
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**STEPS YOU CAN TAKE TO IMPROVE THE
QUALITY AND LENGTH OF YOUR LIFE**

2008: A Year of Good Health for Men

Below is a summary of important steps you can take to improve the quality—and length—of your life.

Click on the links to learn more about how you can start living healthier today!



Eat Healthy "An apple a day keeps the doctor away." What you eat and drink and what you don't eat and drink can definitely make a difference to your health. Eating five or more servings of fruits and vegetables a day and less saturated fat can help improve your health and may reduce the risk of cancer and other chronic diseases. Have a balanced diet, and watch how much you eat.

Maintain a Healthy Weight Obesity is at an all time high in the United States, and the epidemic may be getting worse. Those who are overweight or obese have increased risks for diseases and conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease, and stroke. Eat better, get regular exercise, and see your health care provider about any health concerns to make sure you are on the right track to staying healthy.



Get Moving More than 50 percent of American men and women do not get enough physical activity to provide health benefits. For adults, thirty minutes of moderate physical activity on most, preferably all, days of the week is recommended. It doesn't take a lot of time or money, but it does take commitment. Start slowly, work up to a satisfactory level, and don't overdo it. You can develop one routine, or you can do something different every day. Find fun ways to stay in shape and feel good, such as dancing, gardening, cutting the grass, swimming, walking, or jogging.

Be Smoke-Free Health concerns associated with smoking include cancer and lung disease. Smoking triples the risk of dying from heart disease among those who are middle-aged. Second-hand smoke - smoke that you inhale when others smoke - also affects your health. If you smoke, quit today! Helplines, counseling, medications, and other forms of support are available to help you quit.

Get Routine Exams and Screenings Sometimes they're once a year. Other times they're more or less often. Based on your age, health history, lifestyle, and other important issues, you and your health care provider can determine how often you need to be examined and screened for certain diseases and conditions. These include high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, sexually transmitted diseases, and cancers of the skin, prostate, and colon. When problems are found early, your chances for treatment and cure are better. Routine exams and screenings can help save lives.



Get Appropriate Vaccinations They're not just for kids. Adults need them too. Some vaccinations are for everyone. Others are recommended if you work in certain jobs, have certain lifestyles, travel to certain places, or have certain health conditions. Protect yourself from illness and disease by keeping up with your vaccinations.



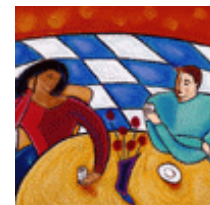
Manage Stress Perhaps now more than ever before, job stress poses a threat to the health of workers and, in turn, to the health of organizations. Balancing obligations to your employer and your family can be challenging. What's your stress level today? Protect your mental and physical health by engaging in activities that help you manage your stress at work and at home.

Know Yourself and Your Risks Your parents and ancestors help determine some of who you are. Your habits, work and home environments and lifestyle also help to define your health and your risks. You may be at an increased risk for certain diseases or conditions because of what you do, where you work, and how you play. Being healthy means doing some homework, knowing yourself, and knowing what's best for you... because you are one of a kind.



Be Safe- Protect Yourself What comes to mind when you think about safety and protecting yourself? Is it fastening seat belts, applying sunscreen, wearing helmets, or having smoke detectors? It's all of these and more. It's everything from washing your hands to watching your relationships. Did you know that men at work die most frequently from motor vehicle incidents, machine-related injuries, homicides, and falls? Take steps to protect yourself and others wherever you are.

Be Good to Yourself Health is not merely the absence of disease; it's a lifestyle. Whether it's getting enough sleep, relaxing after a stressful day, or enjoying a hobby, it's important to take time to be good to yourself. Take steps to balance work, home, and play. Pay attention to your health, and make healthy living a part of your life.





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SPECIAL CONCERNS OF AFRICAN AMERICANS, LATINOS AND OTHER MINORITIES

Although all men generally live shorter and less-healthy lives than women, African-American men and some other minorities are at even greater risk. African-American men, for example, suffer the worst health of any major population group in the United States, living an average of 6 years less than white men. The reasons for this include lack of health insurance or affordable healthcare, poor education, greater exposure to violence, and genetics. ***Because of lack of screening, African-American men are twice as likely to die of prostate cancer as white men.***

- ☑ **YOU AND YOUR DOCTOR** African-American and Latino men are less likely than white men to visit a doctor. Again, some of the obstacles include lack of insurance, as well as distrust of the medical establishment. Men's Health Network maintains a list of free and low-cost clinics and information about discounted drugs at: www.healthclinicsonline.com. You can also find information at this site about Medicare, Medicaid, and clinical trials.
- ☑ **DIET AND NUTRITION** Over 60 percent of American men are overweight or obese. Mexican-American men are the most likely to be overweight, followed by white men and African-American men.
- ☑ **EXERCISE AND FITNESS** Despite all these benefits, over half of Americans get less exercise than they should, and a quarter gets none at all. African-American and Hispanic men are somewhat less likely to exercise than white men.
- ☑ **SEXUAL HEALTH** African-American men are five times more likely to die of HIV/AIDS than white men. Abstinence is the only sure-fire way to prevent transmission of HIV or other sexually transmitted diseases. However, since abstinence isn't practical for everyone, be sure that you know your partner, always use a latex condom, and avoid drugs or alcohols, which can impair your judgment and increase the chances that you'll engage in unsafe sex.
- ☑ **PROSTATE HEALTH** African-American men are more likely to develop symptoms of benign prostatic hyperplasia (BPH) earlier than white men. They also have the highest rate of prostate cancer in the world—they are at least 50 percent more likely to develop the disease, and twice as likely to die from it, than white men.
- ☑ **CARDIOVASCULAR HEALTH** African-American men are about 30 percent more likely than whites to suffer a stroke and 40 percent more likely to die from it. Among men age 40-59, 50 percent of African-Americans and 30 percent of whites have high blood pressure. African-Americans are less likely to have their cholesterol checked than whites. Fortunately, African-Americans ages 20 and older are less likely than whites the same age to have high cholesterol. But Mexican-American men are more likely.
- ☑ **DIABETES** Over 18 million Americans have diabetes. Hispanics are much more likely to develop diabetes than whites, and African-Americans are about 60 percent more likely. Asians, Pacific Islanders, and American Indians also have elevated risk.
- ☑ **CANCER** African-American men are more likely to develop cancer than men from any other racial or ethnic group. They also have a far higher death rate from most cancers, including oral and lung cancer.
- ☑ **EMOTIONAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING** The last few years have seen an increase in the rate of suicide among young African-American males.
- ☑ **ADDICTION AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE** Approximately 27 percent of African-American men smoke, compared to 25 percent of whites. Among ethnic groups, Hispanics average the most drinks per day, followed by whites, then blacks. African-Americans, however, have the highest alcohol-related death rates of the three groups. African-Americans are also more likely than whites or Hispanics to suffer from alcohol-related liver disease.
- ☑ **ACCIDENT PREVENTION AND SAFETY** African-American men between the ages of 24 to 40 are much more likely to be murdered than any other ethnic group. The murder rate is 1 in 30 for black men, compared to 1 in 179 for white men. (Compare that with 1 in 132 for black women and 1 in 495 for white women.) Also, men of color are more likely to be employed in manual labor jobs such as construction and other hazardous occupations, so emphasis on workplace safety becomes especially important.
- ☑ **BLOOD DISORDERS: SICKLE CELL ANEMIA** This disease, which affects primarily African-Americans and people of Mediterranean ancestry, is named after the deformed, sickle-shaped red blood cells it creates. The cells are extremely fragile and break up, causing damage to capillaries (the tiny blood vessels that deliver oxygen throughout the body). That deprives the body's organs and tissues of oxygen. Symptoms may include headaches, poor circulation, sores on the legs and ankles and stroke. Sickle cell can't be cured, but it can be treated, usually with folic acid, which helps the body produce red blood cells that may replace the damaged cells. Today, most sufferers live past the age of 50. In order to develop sickle cell; a child must inherit a defective gene from both parents. About 10 percent of African Americans carry one defective gene. That means they won't develop it, but they could pass it on to their children if their spouses are also carriers. If you are African-American or of Mediterranean descent and planning to start a family, talk to your doctor about getting a blood test to determine whether you carry the gene.

SOURCES and MORE INFORMATION

For the sources for this article and more information about Men's Health, please visit the following Web sites:

[National Institute of Health - Men's Health](#)

[Center for Disease Control and Prevention - Men's Health](#)

[National Cancer Institute Cites Link Between Diet and Life-Threatening Diseases in African-American Men](#)

[US Department of Health and Human Services - Healthy Men Checklist](#)

[Blueprint for Men's Health Booklet, Men's Health Network.Org.](#)