



AFRICAN AMERICAN HEALTH STATISTICS

The African American community is disproportionately affected by heart disease, diabetes, cancer, stroke, and obesity. The *African American 5 a Day Campaign* was created by the Cancer Prevention and Nutrition Section of the California Department of Health Services to invigorate and engage the African American community in developing programs and strategies for improving this health crisis.

RISK FACTORS

Diet

- African American adults, on average, consume only 3.0 servings of fruits and vegetables a day.¹
- 44% of African American adults have two or fewer servings of fruits and vegetables a day.¹

Motivators and Barriers

- For African Americans, taste and trying to eat healthier were the reasons most often listed for why they eat more fruits and vegetables.²
- Among African Americans who think they should eat more fruits and vegetables, over 75% listed difficulty buying fruits and vegetables at fast food places as the leading barrier to eating more fruits and vegetables. The reasons cited for not eating more fruits and vegetables was they are hard to get at work and hard to buy in restaurants.¹

Physical Activity

- In California, 18 percent of African Americans reported that they did not participate in any leisure time physical activity in the past month.³
- More than half of African Americans reported that they did not participate in the recommended levels of physical activity (30 minutes of moderate or vigorous physical activity, 5 days a week).²

Overweight and Obesity

- More than one-third (34%) of African American adults in California are obese.³
- In total, 69 percent of African Americans in California are overweight or obese.³

CHRONIC DISEASE

Heart Disease

- Cardiovascular diseases (CVD) rank as the number 1 killer of African Americans, claiming the lives of 36 percent of the more than 290,000 African Americans who die each year.⁴
- More than 4 in every 10 African American adults (non-Hispanic) have CVD.⁵ This includes diseases of the heart, stroke, high



blood pressure, congestive heart failure, congenital heart defects, hardening of the arteries, and other diseases of the circulatory system.⁴

- The rate of high blood pressure in African Americans in the United States is among the highest in the world.⁴

Cancer

- African Americans are less likely to survive for 5 years after being diagnosed with cancer than whites at all stages of diagnosis. This may be due in part to the fact that cancer factors associated with poverty which include reduced access to medical care; diagnosis at a later stage; when the disease has spread to regional or distant tissue; and disparities in treatment.⁶
- Although cancer death rates decreased for African Americans in the 1990's, African Americans, and African American men in particular, still have a higher death rate from all causes of cancer compared to whites.⁶

Diabetes

- In 2002, approximately 2.7 million or 11.4 percent of African Americans in the US had diabetes.⁷
- African Americans were 1.6 times more likely to have diabetes than whites of similar ages.⁷
- Compared to whites, African Americans experience higher rates of diabetes complications such as eye disease, kidney failure, and amputations.⁸

- Among African Americans in California, 9.3 percent reported they had been diagnosed with diabetes, which is 1.7 times the rates of white Californians.⁹

Leading Causes of Death

- Heart disease and cancer are the first and second leading causes of death for African American adults 18 years and older in California⁹ and nationally.¹⁰
- Heart disease and cancer combined to account for over half (51%) of deaths among African Americans in California⁹ and for nearly half (48%) of all deaths among African Americans nationally.¹¹
- Diabetes was the fourth leading cause of death among African American adults 18 years and older, accounting for 812 deaths in California¹⁰ and 12,687 deaths nationally during 2002.¹¹



This information is brought to you by the *African American 5 a Day Campaign*. Visit our Web site at www.ca5aday.com.

- 1 California Dietary Practices Survey: 2003 [Data file]. Sacramento, CA: Cancer Prevention and Nutrition Section, California Department of Health Services.
- 2 California Dietary Practices Survey: 2001 [Data file]. Sacramento, CA: Cancer Prevention and Nutrition Section, California Department of Health Services.
- 3 California Behavioral Risk Factor Survey: 2004 [Data file]. Sacramento, CA: Survey Research Group, Cancer Surveillance Section, California Department of Health Services.
- 4 American Heart Association. *Heart Facts 2005: All Americans/African Americans*. Retrieved June 9, 2005, from <http://www.americanheart.org/sownloadable/heart/1106668161495AllAmHeartFacts05.pdf>.
- 5 Estimates are age-adjusted to remove the effect of differences in the age distribution of population groups.
- 6 American Cancer Society. (2005). *Cancer Facts & Figures for African Americans 2005-2006*. Retrieved June 9, 2005, from <http://cancer.org/downloads/STT/CAFF2005AAv4PWSecured.pdf>
- 7 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2004). *National diabetes fact sheet: general information and national estimates on diabetes in the United States, 2003*. Rev ed. (p. 5). Retrieved. June 30, 2004, from http://www.cdc.gov/diabetes/pubs/pdf/ndfs_2003.pdf
- 8 National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse, National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases. (2002). *Diabetes in African Americans Fact Sheet*. Retrieved June 30, 2004, from <http://diabetes.niddk.nih.gov/dm/pubs/africanamerican/index.htm#6>
- 9 California Health Interview Survey—Ask CHIS 2003. Retrieved June 9, 2005, from <http://www.chis.ucla.edu>
- 10 California Department of Health Services, Center for Health Statistics. (2005) *Vital Statistics of California 2002*. Retrieved June 9, 2005, from <http://www.dhs.ca.gov/hisp/chs/OHIR/reports/vitalstatisticsocalifornia/vsofca2002.pdf>.
- 11 Anderson RN, Smith BL. (2005). *National Vital Statistics Reports: Deaths: Leading Causes for 2002*. Retrieved June 9, 2005, from http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/nvsr/nvsr53/nvsr53_17.pdf