

The 8 Top Diseases that Affect African Americans' Health

EMORY

Healthy Aging Study

Regular check-ups and living a healthy lifestyle is key to living a healthy and vibrant life. Check out this list of the top 8 diseases that affect African Americans:

1 Diabetes

A diabetes diagnosis is 60% more likely to occur in the African American population. Common warning signs include increased thirst and hunger, dry mouth, frequent urination/urine infection, unexplained weight loss, fatigue, blurred vision and headaches.

2 Asthma

African Americans are 3 times more likely to suffer an asthma attack. Look out for constant coughing or fatigue (especially at night or during exercise), loss of breath and tightness in the chest.

3 Sarcoidosis

Sarcoidosis (lung scarring) is 10 to 17 times more common among African-Americans. The disease has symptoms like tender, reddish bumps on the skin, red, teary eyes or blurred vision, swollen and painful joints and enlarged lymph glands.

4 Lung Cancer

Despite lower tobacco exposure, African American men are 50% more likely than Caucasian men to get lung cancer.

5 Stroke

Death from strokes happens 4 times more often in 35 to 54 year-old African Americans. Warning signs include sudden numbness in the face, arm or leg, confusion or trouble communicating, vision problems, problems with walking or coordination, or a severe headache.

6 High Blood Pressure

Over 40% of African Americans over 20 have high blood pressure. This disease can be present without symptoms, so it is a good idea to get tested every year.

7 Cancer

African American men have a 40% higher cancer death rate than Caucasian men. Statistically, African American women have a 20% higher cancer death rate compared to their Caucasian counterparts.

8 Alzheimer's

African Americans are 2 to 3 times more likely than other races to develop Alzheimer's and nearly 4 times as likely to have cognitive impairment at an earlier age.

The bottom line:

Multiple factors such as your diet, activity level, and the environment affect your health as you age. By paying attention to the warning signs of various diseases, you can often treat or prevent them and promote healthy aging.



Be sure to check our website often for new tips and facts on healthy aging.

SOURCE: WebMD

404-727-4877 • healthyaging.emory.edu