

## **April is National Minority Health Month**

**What is Health Equity?** Health equity is when everyone has the opportunity to be as healthy as possible.

**What Are Health Disparities?** Health disparities are differences in health outcomes and their causes among groups of people. For example, African American children are more likely to die from asthma compared to non-Hispanic white children. Reducing health disparities creates better health for all Americans.

**Why is Health Equity Important?** Health is central to human happiness and well-being and is affected by where people live, learn, work, and play. According to the World Health Organization, health also makes an important contribution to economic progress.

<https://www.cdc.gov/healthequity/features/minority-health-month/index.html#:~:text=April%20is%20National%20Minority%20Health%20Month.>

### **Disparities:**

Osteoporosis:

- Compared to white women, Black women with postmenopausal osteoporosis experience worse outcomes after sustaining hip and several other types of fractures.
- The Black community is 8-10% less likely to get screened for osteoporosis depending on age, and therefore more likely to go undiagnosed.
- Up to 75% of Black Americans are lactose-intolerant. This can prevent them from consuming dairy products—an excellent source of bone-strengthening calcium and Vitamin D. In fact, Black women's calcium intake is 50% less than the Recommended Dietary Allowance.

[https://ncoa.org/article/osteoporosis-the-risk-factors-for-black-women?utm\\_source=newsletter&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=CHA](https://ncoa.org/article/osteoporosis-the-risk-factors-for-black-women?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=CHA)

Diabetes:

- Foreign-born Latinos have 45% lower mortality risks than US-born Latinos BUT this “advantage” is specific to Mexican Americans and does not apply to Puerto Ricans and Cubans
- Mexicans and Puerto Ricans are about twice as likely to die from diabetes as whites. Mexicans also are nearly twice as likely to die from chronic liver disease and cirrhosis as whites. <https://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/hispanic-health/index.html>
- Latinos have a lower likelihood of seeking and receiving health-care services than the total US population. Lower access to and receipt of health care is related to lower health insurance coverage (76% vs. 91%) and language barriers. Latinos have rates of uninsurance that are among the highest of any population.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5044865/>

#### Cancer:

- From 2014-2018, Asian/Pacific Islander men were 50 percent less likely to have prostate cancer, as compared to non-Hispanic white men, but they were 70 percent more likely to have stomach cancer.
- Although Asian/Pacific Islander women are 20 percent less likely to have breast cancer than non-Hispanic white women, they are twice as likely to have stomach cancer.
- Both Asian/Pacific Islander men and women have almost twice the incidence of liver & IBD\* cancer, as compared to the non-Hispanic white population.
- Asian/Pacific Islander men are twice as likely to die from stomach cancer as compared to non-Hispanic white men, and Asian/Pacific Islander women are 2.5 times as likely to die from the same disease, as compared to non-Hispanic white women.

<https://minorityhealth.hhs.gov/omh/browse.aspx?lvl=4&lvlid=46>

#### Alcohol Related Health Concerns:

- American Indians and Alaska Natives born today have a life expectancy that is 5.5 years less than the U.S. all races population (73.0 years to 78.5 years, respectively).
- Alcohol-induced mortality is 6.6 times higher for American Indians and Alaskan Natives than compared to all other races in the United States.
- Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis deaths are 4.6 times higher than for all other races in the United States.

<https://www.ihs.gov/newsroom/factsheets/disparities/>

#### What you can do:

- Ensure you are getting enough calcium and vitamin D. Consult your doctor to determine if a supplement is necessary.
- Exercising can reduce the rate of bone loss; most bone fractures occur because of a fall. You can reduce your chances of falling by exercising to build your muscle strength and improve your balance. Exercise can also slow the rate of bone loss, which reduces the risk of fractures from osteoporosis.
- Know your numbers and check your blood sugar regularly ( if diabetic)
- Get all appropriate cancer screenings in a timely way ( mammograms, colonoscopies, etc.)
- Do not ignore changes to your health or symptoms that develop; always consult your health care provider.
- If you or someone you know is struggling with alcohol, get help. You can call 1-877-8-HOPENY or text 467369 anytime.