

# 15 Leading Causes of Death for African Americans, 1999

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

All African Americans	African American Women	African American Men
77,713 Heart Disease	40,636 Heart Disease	37,077 Heart Disease
61,409 Malignant Neoplasm	28,867 Malignant Neoplasm	32,542 Malignant Neoplasm
18,731 Cerebrovascular	10,908 Cerebrovascular	8,629 Unintentional Injury
12,533 Unintentional Injury	7,112 Diabetes Mellitus	7,823 Cerebrovascular
11,830 Diabetes Mellitus	3,904 Unintentional Injury	6,131 Homicide
7,840 Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease	3,675 Nephritis	5,377 HIV
7,751 HIV	3,388 Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease	4,718 Diabetes Mellitus
7,536 Homicide	3,178 Septicemia	4,452 Chronic Lower Respiratory Disease
6,659 Nephritis	3,008 Influenza & Pneumonia	2,984 Nephritis
5,794 Influenza & Pneumonia	2,374 HIV	2,818 Perinatal Period
5,772 Septicemia	2,182 Perinatal Period	2,786 Influenza & Pneumonia
5,000 Perinatal Period	2,158 Hypertension	2,594 Septicemia
3,708 Hypertension	1,636 Alzheimer's Disease	1,812 Liver Disease
2,793 Liver Disease	1,405 Homicide	1,630 Suicide
2,325 Alzheimer's Disease	981 Liver Disease	1,550 Hypertension

The following sections are covered in greater detail throughout the next chapter of African American Health.  
 Heart Disease and Cerebrovascular – see Cardiovascular Disease/Stroke Section  
 Malignant Neoplasm – see Cancer section; Diabetes Mellitus – see Diabetes section  
 HIV – see HIV/AIDS section; Influenza & Pneumonia – see Immunization section  
 Perinatal Period – see Infant Mortality

# Cancer

## Healthy People 2010 (HP2010) Cancer Goal

The Healthy People 2010 goal for cancer is to reduce the number of new cancer cases as well as the illness, disability, and death caused by cancer.

While there are a total of 15 cancer objectives, the following information is for lung, breast, colorectal, and prostate cancer—the most common cancers found in African Americans.

## Cancer Disparities for African Americans

- African Americans are about 34 percent more likely to die of cancer than are whites and more than two times more likely to die of cancer than are Asian or Pacific Islanders, American Indians, and Hispanics.
- African American women are more likely to die of breast and colon cancers than are women of any other racial and ethnic group, and they have approximately the same lung cancer death rates as white women.
- African American men have the highest death rates of colon and rectum, lung, and prostate cancers.
- Age-adjusted lung cancer death rates are approximately 40 percent higher among African American males than white males.
- Breast cancer deaths in African American females continue to increase, in part, because breast cancer is diagnosed at later stages in African American females.

## HP2010 Cancer Objectives

Reduce the overall cancer death from 202.7 cancer deaths per 100,000 population to 159.9 deaths per 100,000 population.

- In 1999, the rate of overall cancer deaths among African Americans (non-Hispanic) was 261.4 per 100,000 population compared to the total rate of 202.7 cancer deaths per 100,000 population.

Reduce the lung cancer death rate from 56.0 lung cancer deaths per 100,000 population to 44.9 deaths per 100,000 population.

- In 1999, the rate of lung cancer deaths among African Americans (non-Hispanic) was 67.0 per 100,000 population compared to the total rate of 56.0 per 100,000 population.

Reduce the breast cancer death rate from 27.0 breast cancer death per 100,000 females to 22.3 deaths per 100,000 females.

- In 1999, the rate of breast cancer deaths among African Americans (non-Hispanic) was 36.7 per 100,000 population compared to the total rate of 27.0 per 100,000 population.

Reduce the colorectal cancer death rate from 21.1 colorectal cancer deaths per 100,000 population to 13.9 deaths per 100,000 population.

- In 1999, the rate of colorectal cancer deaths among African Americans (non-Hispanic) was 28.2 per 100,000 population compared to the total rate of 21.1 per 100,000 population.

Reduce prostate cancer deaths from 30.9 prostate cancer deaths per 100,000 males to 28.8 deaths per 100,000 males.

- In 1999, the rate of prostate cancer deaths among African Americans (non-Hispanic) was 68.7 per 100,000 population compared to the total rate of 30.9 per 100,000 population.

## According to the American Cancer Society:

- In 2002, the American Cancer Society (ACS) estimates that 1,284,900 new cases of cancer will be diagnosed and 555,500 people will die from cancer in the United States
- Cancers most common in men are prostate, lung and bronchus, and colon and rectum, comprising 55 percent of all new cancer cases. Prostate cancer will account for 30 percent (189,000) of new cancer cases in men in 2002.
- Cancers most commonly diagnosed in women are breast, lung and bronchus, and colon and rectum, accounting for about 55 percent of new cancer cases. Breast cancer alone is expected to account for 31 percent (203,500) of all new cancer cases among women in 2002.
- For men, the most cancer deaths occur from lung and bronchus, prostate, and colon and rectum.
- For women, the most cancer deaths occur from lung and bronchus, breast, and colon and rectum in women. While there is more public awareness about breast cancer, lung cancer is the number one cause of cancer death in women, not breast cancer.
- Surpassing breast cancer as the leading cause of cancer death in 1987, lung cancer is expected to account for about 25 percent of all female cancer deaths in 2002.
- Overall, African Americans have the highest incidence and mortality rates for cancer.
- The incidence rate of cancer in African Americans is 60 percent higher than Hispanics and Asian/Pacific Islanders and is more than twice as high as the rate for American Indians.
- The mortality rate is about 33 percent higher in African Americans than among whites, and more than twice as high as cancer death rates in Asian/Pacific Islanders, American Indians, and Hispanics.
- Except for female breast cancer incidence and female lung cancer death rates, where rates are highest in whites, race- and sex-specific incidence and death rates for the most common cancer sites are higher for African Americans than for any of the other racial and ethnic groups.

## Trends in Cancer

- Cancer incidence rates decreased by 2 percent per year among Hispanics, by 1.7 percent for African Americans, and by 1.2 percent for whites, while rates remained relatively stable among American Indians/Alaska Natives and Asian/Pacific Islanders between 1992 and 1998.
- For all cancer sites combined, the annual mortality rate decreased 1.3 percent in African Americans, 1.2 percent in Asian/Pacific Islanders, 1.1 percent among whites, and 0.9 percent among Hispanics; and it leveled off in American Indians/Alaska Natives.
- For race- and sex-specific trends, African-American men showed the largest decrease in both incidence and mortality during the same calendar years.

## Information Sources:

### Healthy People 2010

*Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion*

*U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*

*200 Independence Avenue, SW*

*Washington, D.C. 20201*

*800-367-4725*

*<http://www.health.gov/healthypeople>*

*For the complete list of cancer objectives, go to*

*<http://www.health.gov/healthypeople/document/HTML/Volume1/03Cancer.htm>*

*Note: All data age-adjusted to the year 2000 standard population. Data source: DATA2010...the Healthy People 2010 Database-February 2002 Edition*

### **American Cancer Society**

1599 Clifton Road, NE

Atlanta, GA 30329

800-ACS-2345 (800-227-2345)

<http://www.cancer.org>

*Note: The incidence and mortality data for this 2002 information was age-adjusted to the 2000 population standard of the United States.*

## **Cardiovascular Disease/Stroke**

### **Healthy People 2010 (HP2010) Cardiovascular Disease/Stroke Goal**

The HP2010 goal is to improve cardiovascular health and quality of life through:

- The prevention, detection, and treatment of risk factors;
- Early identification and treatment of heart attacks and strokes; and
- Prevention of recurrent cardiovascular events.

### **Cardiovascular Disparities**

- The prevalence of heart attacks among U.S. adults aged 20 years and older is 4.3 percent and 3.3 percent for African American (non-Hispanic) males and females, respectively.
- While White (non-Hispanic) men have a higher prevalence rate of heart attacks (5.2 percent) than African American men, White (non-Hispanic) women have a lower rate (2.0 percent) than African American women in the same group.

### **Stroke Disparities**

- The prevalence of stroke for persons aged 20 years and older in the United States was 2.2 percent for White (non-Hispanic) males and 1.5 percent for females. These percents are lower than those for African Americans (non-Hispanic)-2.5 percent for males and 3.2 percent for females.
- Stroke deaths are highest in African American females born before 1950 and in African American males born after 1950.
- Among the racial and gender groups, declines in the stroke death rate are smallest in African American males.
- When adjusted for age, stroke deaths are almost 80 percent higher in African Americans than in Whites and about 17 percent higher in males than in females.
- Age-specific stroke deaths are higher in African Americans than in Whites in all age groups up to age 84 years and higher in males than in females throughout all adult age groups.

### **HP2010 Cardiovascular Disease/Stroke Objectives**

Reduce the number of coronary heart disease deaths from 204 deaths per 100,000 population in 1999 to 166 deaths per 100,000 population.

- In 1999, the rate of coronary heart disease deaths among African Americans (non-Hispanic) was 255 per 100,000 population compared to the total population rate of 204 per 100,000 population.

Reduce stroke deaths from 62 deaths per 100,000 population in 1999 to 48 deaths per 100,000 population.

- In 1999, the rate of stroke deaths among African Americans (non-Hispanic) was 85 per 100,000 population compared to the total population rate of 62 per 100,000 population.

#### **According to the American Heart Association:**

- Cardiovascular disease (CVD) accounted for 33.8 percent of all deaths in African American men.
- African American men in the 65-84 age group had a higher number of cardiovascular deaths (23,324) than African American men in other age groups.
- CVD accounted for 40.8 percent of all deaths in African American women.
- African American women in the 65-84 age group had a higher number of cardiovascular deaths (26,864) than African American women in other age groups.
- The overall death rate from CVD was 354.1 per 100,000 population but rose to 402.1 for African American women and to 526.0 for African American men.
- As many as 30 percent of all deaths in hypertensive African American men and 20 percent of all deaths in hypertensive African American women may be attributed to high blood pressure.
- Per 100,000 population, stroke death rates for African American men and women were 87.4 and 78.1, respectively.
- Young African Americans are 2-3 times more likely to have an ischemic stroke than their White counterparts.

#### **Information Sources:**

##### **Healthy People 2010**

*Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20201  
800-367-4725*

*<http://www.health.gov/healthypeople>*

*For the detailed list of cardiovascular and stroke objectives, go to*

*<http://www.health.gov/healthypeople/document/HTML/Volume1/12Heart.htm>*

*Note: All data age-adjusted to the year 2000 standard population. Data source: DATA2010...the Healthy People 2010 Database-February 2002 Edition*

##### **American Heart Association**

*National Center  
7272 Greenville Avenue  
Dallas, TX 75231  
800-242-8721  
<http://www.americanheart.org>*

##### **American Stroke Association**

*National Center  
7272 Greenville Avenue  
Dallas, TX 75231*

## Diabetes

### Healthy People 2010 (HP2010) Diabetes Goal

The overall HP2010 goal for diabetes is, through prevention programs, reduce the disease and economic burden of diabetes, and improve the quality of life for all persons who have or are at risk for diabetes.

### Diabetes Disparities

- Gaps exist among racial and ethnic groups in the rate of diabetes and its associated complications in the United States.
- Certain racial and ethnic communities, including African Americans, Hispanics, American Indians, and certain Pacific Islander and Asian American populations as well as economically disadvantaged or older people, suffer disproportionately compared to White populations.
- The relative number of persons with diabetes in African American, Hispanic, and American Indian communities is one to five times greater than in White communities.
- Deaths from diabetes are 2 times higher in the African American population than they are in the White population.
- Diabetes-associated renal failure is 2.5 times higher in the African American population than it is in the Hispanic population.

### HP2010 Diabetes Objectives

Reduce diabetes-related deaths to 45 deaths per 100,000 population.

- In 1999, the diabetes-related death rate among African Americans (non-Hispanic) was 139 per 100,000 population.

Reduce cardiovascular disease deaths among persons with diabetes to 309 per 100,000 population.

- In 1999, the cardiovascular disease death rate among African Americans (non-Hispanic) with diabetes was 328 per 100,000 population.

Increase the percent of annual dilated eye examinations in persons with diabetes, ages 18 years and over, to 75 percent.

- In 1999, the percentage of diabetic African Americans who received an annual dilated eye examinations was 67 percent.

Increase the percent of people, ages 18 and older, who receive diabetes education to 60 percent.

- In 1999, the percentage of African Americans who received diabetes education was 51 percent.

### According to the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS):

- Nearly 16 million of all Americans are pre-diabetic (their blood sugar levels are high, but not high enough to be classified as diabetic), sharply raises the risk for developing type 2 diabetes and increases the risk of heart disease by 50 percent.

- HHS-supported research shows that most people with pre-diabetes will likely develop diabetes within a decade unless they make modest changes in their diet and level of physical activity, which can help them reduce their risks and avoid the debilitating disease.
- An updated HHS estimate shows 17 million Americans suffer from diabetes-an increase of 8 percent from the most commonly used previous estimate. The new estimate is based on population changes in the most recent U.S. census.
- In the United States, nearly 60 percent of adults are now considered significantly overweight, and in adolescents the prevalence of obesity has nearly tripled in the past 20 years.

### According to the National Institute on Diabetes & Digestive & Kidney Diseases (NIDDK)

- Approximately 8 percent of all Whites have diabetes-that is about 11.4 million people.
- Approximately 13 percent of all African Americans have diabetes-that is about 2.8 million people.
- On average, African Americans are two times more likely to have diabetes than Whites (non-Hispanic) of similar age.
- The frequency of diabetic retinopathy is 40 percent to 50 percent higher in African Americans than in Whites, according to NHANES III data.
- Death rates for people with diabetes are 27 percent higher for African Americans compared with Whites.
- The highest incidence of diabetes in African Americans occurs between 65 and 74 years of age. Twenty-five percent of these individuals have diabetes.
- African Americans with diabetes experience kidney failure, also called end-stage renal disease (ESRD), about four times more often than diabetic Whites.

### Information Sources:

#### Healthy People 2010

*Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion*

*U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*

*200 Independence Avenue, SW*

*Washington, D.C. 20201*

*800-367-4725*

*<http://www.health.gov/healthypeople>*

*For the detailed list of diabetes objectives, go to*

*<http://www.health.gov/healthypeople/document/HTML/Volume1/05Diabetes.htm>*

*Note: Death rates are age-adjusted to the year 2000 standard population. Data source: DATA2010...the Healthy People 2010 Database—February 2002 Edition*

#### National Diabetes Information Clearinghouse (NDIC)

*1 Information Way*

*Bethesda, MD 20892-3560*

*800-860-8747*

*301-654-3327*

*301-907-8906 Fax*

*<http://www.niddk.nih.gov/health/diabetes/pubs/afam/afam.htm>*

# HIV/AIDS

## Healthy People 2010 (HP2010) HIV Goals

The overall HP2010 goal is to prevent human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection and its related illness and death.

### HIV Disparities

- By the end of 1998, the number of African Americans living with AIDS was almost identical to that of Whites.
- The rate of African Americans living with AIDS increased from 33 percent in 1992 to 40 percent in 1998.
- In 1998, 55 percent of the reported AIDS cases occurred among African Americans and Hispanics, yet these two population groups represent an estimated 13 percent and 12 percent, respectively, of the total U.S. population.
- The AIDS case rate among African Americans in calendar year 1998 was 66.4 per 100,000 persons, or eight times the rate for Whites (8.2 per 100,000) and over twice the rate for Hispanics (28.1 per 100,000).
- Among women with AIDS, African Americans and Hispanics have been especially affected, accounting for nearly 77 percent of cumulative cases reported among women by 1998.
- From 1999 to 2000, the estimated number of persons living with AIDS increased 7.9 percent.
- Center for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that about 339,000 persons were living with AIDS as of December 2000: 41 percent were African Americans, 38 percent were White, 20 percent were Hispanic, 1 percent were Asian/Pacific Islander, and <1 percent were American Indian/Alaska Native.

### HP2010 HIV/AIDS Objectives

Reduce the number of new cases of AIDS to 1.0 per 100,000 population in people ages 13 years and older-in 1999 there were 18.6 per 100,000 population.

- In 1999, new AIDS cases among African Americans (non-Hispanic) was 79.9 per 100,000 population in people ages 13 years and older.

Increase HIV testing in adults (ages 25-44 years) with tuberculosis (TB) to 85 percent-up from the 55 percent getting tested in 1998.

- Seventy-six percent of African American (non-Hispanic) adults with TB got tested for HIV in 1998-just short of the 85 percent target.

Reduce the number of HIV-infection deaths to 0.7 per 100,000 population-in 1999 there were 5.4 per 100,000 population.

- In 1999, the number of HIV-infection deaths among African Americans (non-Hispanic) was 24.9 per 100,000-almost 36 times the target of 0.7 per 100,000 population.

**According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention**, the number of AIDS cases reported in African American men, women, and children under the age of 13 through June 2001, in the United States was as follows:

- 220,982 cases in African American (non-Hispanic) men;

- 80,802 cases in African American (non-Hispanic) women; and
- 5,283 cases in African American children.

The number of African Americans (non-Hispanic) living with AIDS more than doubled in a 7-year period:

- An estimated 60,644 African Americans (non-Hispanic) were living with AIDS in the United States in 1993;
- An estimated 92,014 African Americans (non-Hispanic) were living with AIDS in the United States in 1996; and
- An estimated 139,670 African Americans (non-Hispanic) were living with AIDS in the United States in 2000.

### **Information Sources:**

#### **Healthy People 2010**

*Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion*

*U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*

*200 Independence Avenue, SW*

*Washington, D.C. 20201*

*800-367-4725*

*<http://www.health.gov/healthypeople>*

*For the detailed list of HIV objectives, go to <http://www.health.gov/healthypeople/document/HTML/Volume1/13HIV.htm>*

*Note: All data age-adjusted to the year 2000 standard population. Data source: DATA2010...the Healthy People 2010 Database-February 2002 Edition*

#### **HIV/AIDS Surveillance Report, Vol. 13, No. 1**

*Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention*

*National Center for HIV, STD and AIDS Prevention*

*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

*Mail Stop E-49*

*Atlanta, GA 30333*

*404-639-2007 Fax*

*<http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/stats/hasr1301.htm>*

## **Immunization**

### **Healthy People 2010 (HP2010) Immunization Goal**

The HP2010 goal is to prevent disease, disability, and death from infectious diseases, including vaccine-preventable diseases.

### **Immunization Disparities**

- While vaccinations against pneumonia and influenza among African Americans and Hispanics 65 years and older has increased, their coverage is still lower than the general population.
- In 1997, African American and Hispanic influenza vaccinations were 45 percent and 53 percent respectively, compared to rates of 66 percent for Whites.

### **HP2010 Immunization Objectives**

Insure that 80 percent of children ages 19 to 35 months are fully immunized.

- In 2000, 68 percent of African American (non-Hispanic) children were fully immunized.

Insure that 90 percent of non-institutionalized adults over the age of 65 years receive influenza and pneumococcal vaccines.

- In 1998, among African Americans (non-Hispanic) in this group, 51 percent of received an influenza vaccine and 33 percent received a pneumococcal vaccine.

Achieve a 60 percent pneumococcal and influenza vaccination rate among non-institutionalized adults ages 18 to 64 years.

- In 1999, among of African Americans (non-Hispanic) in this group, 25 percent received an influenza vaccine and 16 percent received a pneumococcal vaccine.

Reduce new tuberculosis (TB) cases to 1.0 per 100,000 population.

- In 1998, the new TB case rate among African Americans (non-Hispanic) was 17.8 per 100,000 population.
- According to the CDCs Division of Tuberculosis Elimination, in 2000, there were 16,377 cases of tuberculosis, and of those, 5,161 cases were found in African Americans (non-Hispanic).

#### **Information Sources:**

#### **Healthy People 2010**

*Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion*

*U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*

*200 Independence Avenue, SW*

*Washington, D.C. 20201*

*800-367-4725*

*<http://www.health.gov/healthypeople>*

*For the entire list of immunization objectives, go to*

*[http://www.health.gov/healthypeople/document/HTML/Volume1/14Immunization.htm#\\_Toc494510242](http://www.health.gov/healthypeople/document/HTML/Volume1/14Immunization.htm#_Toc494510242)*

*Note: All data age-adjusted to the year 2000 standard population. Data source: DATA2010...the Healthy People 2010 Database-February 2002 Edition*

## **Infant Mortality & Maternal Child Health**

### **Healthy People 2010 (HP2010) Maternal Child Health Goal**

The overall HP2010 goal is to improve the health and well being of women, infants, children, and families.

### **Maternal Child Health Disparities**

- The 1997 infant mortality rate among African American infants was 2.3 times that of White infants. Although infant mortality rates have declined within both racial groups, the proportional discrepancy between African Americans and Whites remains largely unchanged.

- The rate of maternal mortality among African Americans is 20.3 per 100,000 live births, nearly four times the White rate of 5.1 per 100,000. African American women continue to be three to four times more likely than White women to die of pregnancy and its complications.
- The maternal death differential between African Americans and Whites is highest for pregnancies that did not end in live birth (ectopic pregnancy, spontaneous and induced abortions, and gestational trophoblastic disease).
- Rates of low birth weight (LBW) for White women have risen from 5.7 percent of births in 1990 to 6.5 percent in 1998. Among African Americans, the LBW rate has declined slightly in the 1990s but remains twice as high as that of Whites-13 percent in 1998.
- African Americans also are more likely to have other risk factors, such as young maternal age, high birth order (that is, having many live births), less education, and inadequate prenatal care. Puerto Ricans also are especially likely to have LBW infants.
- American Indians or Alaska Natives and African Americans account for a disproportionate share of fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) deaths. In 1990, the rates of FAS among American Indians or Alaska Natives and African Americans were 5.2 and 1.4 per 1,000 live births, respectively, compared with 0.4 per 1,000 among the population as a whole.
- African American and Hispanic women also are less likely than Whites to enter prenatal care early. For both African American and White women, the proportion entering prenatal care in the first trimester rises with maternal age until the late thirties, then begins to decline.
- In 1998, 57 percent of African American women under age 18 years began care early, compared with 66 percent of White women of the same age.
- Among women aged 18 to 24 years, 68 percent of African Americans received care in their first trimester, compared to 76 percent of White women. Among women aged 25 to 39 years, 79 percent of African American women entered care early, compared with 89 percent of White women.
- Women in certain racial and ethnic groups also are less likely than White women to breastfeed their infants. In the early postpartum period, 45 percent of African American mothers and 66 percent of Hispanic mothers breastfed in 1998, compared with 68 percent of White women. These differences persist at 5 to 6 months postpartum, when 19 percent of African American women, 28 percent of Hispanic women, and 31 percent of White women breastfed.

### **HP2010 Maternal Child Health Objectives**

Reduce all infant deaths (within 1 year) from 7.0 per 1,000 live births to 4.5 per 1,000 live births.

- In 1999, the death rate among infants born to African American (non-Hispanic) mothers was 14.1 per 1,000 live births-twice the national rate of 7.0 per 1,000 live births.

Reduce deaths from sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) from 0.67 deaths per 1,000 live births to 0.25 deaths per 1,000 live births.

- In 1999, the SIDS death rate among infants born to African American (non-Hispanic) mothers was 1.32 per 1,000 live births, compared to the national rate of 0.67 deaths per 1,000 live births.

Increase the women receiving early and adequate prenatal care from 75 percent to 90 percent.

- In 1999, 68 percent of African American (non-Hispanic) women received early and adequate prenatal care.

### **Information Sources:**

### **Healthy People 2010**

*Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20201  
800-367-4725*

*<http://www.health.gov/healthypeople>*

*For the detailed list of maternal and child health objectives, go to*

*<http://www.health.gov/healthypeople/document/HTML/Volume2/16MICH.htm>*

*Note: All data age-adjusted to the year 2000 standard population. Data source: DATA2010...the Healthy People 2010 Database-February 2002 Edition*