

Men's Health

Experts say that American men live sicker and die younger than American women. Men visit the doctor 150 million times less frequently than women per year. When men do seek medical assistance, they are more likely to cancel follow-up appointments, more likely to play down the severity of symptoms, and less likely to finish their prescriptions.

* A high percentage of the physician visits made by men are for injuries suffered on the job, at home, or at play.

* Compared with women, men are:

- Less knowledgeable about health
- More likely to die of stroke and almost twice as likely to die of heart disease
- Nine times more likely to die as the result of a job-related injury
- Less physically active during the ages of 35-54
- Five times more likely to commit suicide
- About 1.5 times as likely as females to sustain a traumatic brain injury
- Less likely to use sunscreen (twice as likely to die of skin cancer)
- Three times as likely to be alcoholics

* Top causes of death in men include: heart disease, cancer, stroke, accidents, diabetes, suicide, pneumonia/influenza, kidney disease, and chronic liver disease/cirrhosis. Men have a higher death rate for every one of the top 10 leading causes of death.

Men's health and well-being are deteriorating steadily.

In 1920, the life expectancy of men and women was approximately the same. Now, men are dying seven years earlier than women.

* The American Heart Association reports that heart attack is the single biggest killer of American males. On average, men suffer heart attacks 10 years earlier than women.

* Obesity among men increased significantly between 1999 and 2004. A new global study revealed that 40 percent of men are overweight, while 24 percent of men are obese.

* Men tend to smoke and drink more often than women. The leading cause of cancer death for men is lung cancer. Smoking causes about 90 percent of lung cancer deaths in men.

* Males account for about 80 percent of fatal drownings in the United States. Alcohol use is involved in 25 to 50 percent of deaths.

Prevention

The National Academy of Sciences, U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Cancer Institute, and American Cancer Society recommend five to nine servings of fruit and vegetables be consumed each day. If everyone age 50 or older had regular screening tests for colorectal cancer, at least one-third of deaths could be avoided.

* Participating in moderate-intensity (any activity that burns 3.5 to 7 calories per minute) physical activity is a vital component of a healthy lifestyle. The minimum amount is 30 minutes per day, five or more days of the week.

* One in five men will develop prostate cancer in his lifetime. The American Cancer Society estimates that over 30,000 men will die from the disease this year, a mortality rate approaching that of breast cancer in women. It is recommended that men at high risk begin annual prostate cancer screenings at age 40; all other men begin at age 50.

* Studies among people with heart disease show that lowering high blood cholesterol and high blood pressure can reduce the risk of dying from heart disease, having a nonfatal heart attack, and needing heart bypass surgery or angioplasty.

Sources: CDC, NIH, ScienceDaily, Men*s Health Network, WebMD, Medical News Today, American Heart Association, U.S. National Library of Medicine, and Washington and Shady Grove Adventist Hospitals. This Health Bulletin is for educational purposes only. For additional information, consult your physician. Please feel free to copy and distribute this health resource.