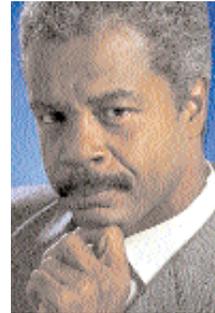


What Every African-American Man Should Know About Chronic Liver Disease



*Michigan Department
of Community Health*



John Engler, Governor

James K. Haveman, Jr., Director

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African-American men often don't like to talk about their health problems. They may not see a doctor until serious problems have developed. This makes prevention of illness and treatment difficult.

Understanding more about your body and how it works can help you develop a healthy lifestyle. This can prevent illness or disease. The major risky health behaviors are smoking, alcohol and substance abuse, lack of exercise, poor diet, unsafe sex and not wearing seatbelts in cars. These are things that can lead to illness, disability, and death.

Common chronic liver diseases are cirrhosis and hepatitis. The most common cause of liver disease is excessive use of alcohol. Alcohol-related disorders, which include alcoholic hepatitis and cirrhosis, outnumber all other kinds of liver disease. Some symptoms of liver disease are fatigue, stomach pain, and yellow skin and eyes. The death rate from chronic liver disease has dropped to the tenth leading cause of death in recent years, but it is still a major cause of concern for African-American men. So if you experience any of the symptoms, call your doctor or other medical provider right away.

Risk Factors:

In addition to long-term use of alcohol, major risk factors for chronic liver disease are injecting drug use, blood transfusions, and sexual activity with numerous partners.

What You Can Do:

Avoid drinking too much alcohol and using injecting drugs. You can get shots to protect against hepatitis from your doctor or local health department.

You Can Make the Difference:

Staying informed about your health and avoiding risky health behaviors are vital in fighting the health problems black men face today. Develop a plan that works best for you.

