

DHD#10 RECOGNIZES APRIL AS NATIONAL CANCER CONTROL/MINORITY HEALTH MONTH

April 18, 2022 – April is a time to raise awareness about the health disparities that continue to affect people from racial and ethnic minority groups and encourage action through health education, early detection, and control of disease complications.

Although African Americans usually smoke fewer cigarettes and start smoking cigarettes at an older age, they are more likely to die from smoking-related diseases than Whites.

African American children and adults are more likely to be exposed to secondhand smoke than any other racial or ethnic group.

During 2013-2014, secondhand smoke exposure was found in:

- 66.1% of African American children aged 3-11 years.
- 55.3% of African American adolescents aged 12-19 years.
- 45.5% of African American adults aged 20 years and older.

African American nonsmokers generally have higher nicotine levels (an indicator of recent exposure to tobacco smoke) than nonsmokers of other races/ethnicities.

Quitting Behavior

Most African American adult cigarette smokers want to quit smoking, and many have tried. Among African American current daily cigarette smokers aged 18 years and older:

- 72.8% report that they want to quit compared to:
 - 67.5% of Whites
 - 69.6% of Asian Americans
 - 67.4% of Hispanics
 - 55.6% of American Indians/Alaska Natives
- 63.4% report attempting to quit compared to:
 - 53.3% of Whites
 - 69.4% of Asian Americans
 - 56.2% of Hispanics

Despite more quitting attempts, African Americans are less successful at quitting than White or Hispanic cigarette smokers, possibly due to lower utilization of cessation treatments such as counseling and medication.

Tobacco Industry Marketing and Influence/Targeted Marketing

The tobacco industry has aggressively marketed menthol products to young people and African Americans, especially in urban communities. Historically, the tobacco industry's attempts to maintain a positive image among African Americans have included such efforts as supporting cultural events and making contributions to minority-represented



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higher education institutions, elected officials, civic and community organizations, and scholarship programs.

Tobacco companies have historically placed larger amounts of advertising in African American publications, exposing African Americans to more cigarette ads than Whites.

Menthol Cigarette Advertising

Historically, the marketing and promotion of menthol cigarettes have been targeted heavily toward African Americans through culturally tailored advertising images and messages.

Over 7 out of 10 African American youth ages 12-17 years who smoke use menthol cigarettes.

African American adults have the highest percentage of menthol cigarette use compared to other racial and ethnic groups.

Menthol in cigarettes is thought to make harmful chemicals more easily absorbed in the body, likely because menthol makes it easier to inhale cigarette smoke. Some research shows that menthol cigarettes may be more addictive than non-menthol cigarettes.

Price Promotions, Retail, and Point-of-Sale Advertising

Tobacco companies use price promotions such as discounts and multi-pack coupons—which are most often used by African Americans and other minority groups, women, and young people—to increase sales.

Areas with large racial/ethnic minority populations tend to have more tobacco retailers located within them, which contributes to greater tobacco advertising exposure.

Menthol products are given more shelf space in retail outlets within African American and other minority neighborhoods.

Culturally appropriate anti-smoking health marketing strategies and mass media campaigns like the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) "Tips From Former Smokers" national tobacco education campaign, as well as CDC-recommended tobacco prevention and control programs and policies, can help reduce the burden of disease among the African American population.

Learn more about how you can help fight the dangers of menthol and other flavored tobacco products at <https://www.endmenthol.org>.

To learn more about District Health Department #10's tobacco cessation programs and services, click here: <https://www.dhd10.org/men-women/healthy-lifestyle/>.

Sourced from the CDC:

<https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/disparities/african-americans/index.htm>

<https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/infographics/adult/pdfs/update-adult-tobacco-infographic-2018-508.pdf>

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