

# SUNDAY MORNING Health Corner

## Men's Health Month

As our nation enters Men's Health Month, we encourage Black men in particular to adopt better health habits. This recommendation is driven by appalling statistics. In sum, the lifespan of Black men is seven years shorter than that of white men (66.7 years versus 73.7 years). This disturbing fact is attributed to the disproportionate impact of many diseases, especially heart disease and cancer.

Unquestionably, the road to reversing a history of systemic racism is a long one. But Black men can take steps today to improve their health and life expectancy. Chief among these is to adopt the habit of visiting the doctor at least once per year. With 63 percent of Black men reporting that they do not get yearly health screenings, we all have loved ones and colleagues who can benefit from making changes like these:

- **Focus on the basics.** Improving your diet and exercise habits will have profound, long-lasting positive impacts on every aspect of your health.
- **Get informed.** Do not just take your doctor's recommendations without asking questions. If doing your own research seems daunting, ask your children, a friend, or your church's health ministry to help you navigate through the available information.
- **Make it a group effort.** Organize a small group of friends or relatives to commit to taking steps (even small ones) to improve their health. Celebrate when groups members achieve each goal.

Find additional resources and tips through your church's health ministry, your fraternity, or an organization that focuses on Black men's health. A good starting point is The Balm In Gilead, [www.balmingilead.org/resources](http://www.balmingilead.org/resources).



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