



## Sickle Cell Anemia: What Black Families Should Know

Sickle cell anemia is one of the most common inherited blood disorders, and it affects Black communities at much higher rates. Understanding the condition, how it is passed down, and how racial bias shapes the experience of care is key to improving health outcomes.

### Understanding why Sickle Cell is more common in Black communities

Sickle cell anemia is more common in Black communities because the sickle cell trait originally helped protect against malaria in Africa. While the trait usually causes no symptoms, sickle cell anemia can lead to serious health problems such as pain, anemia, and infections.

The condition affects all races the same biologically, but Black patients often face added challenges in healthcare. Studies show they may wait longer for emergency treatment, receive less pain medication, and experience stigma from providers. These disparities place an extra burden on Black families living with the disease.

### Why It Matters

- Black people are more likely to carry the sickle cell trait because it historically offered protection against malaria.
- Studies show Black patients with SCA often wait longer for emergency care and are less likely to receive needed pain medication.
- Many people with SCA report experiencing stigma in healthcare settings, adding to the burden of the disease.

### What Can You Do

- Know your family history: A simple blood test can confirm if you carry the sickle cell trait (SCT).
- Understand inheritance risks: If both parents have SCT, there is a 1 in 4 chance their child will have SCA.
- Advocate for fair care: Speak up if pain or symptoms aren't being taken seriously.
- Support awareness and research: Engage with organizations pushing for better treatment and equity.
- Stay informed: Manage risks like dehydration and extreme heat, especially for people with SCT who play sports.



For more Information, visit <https://www.healthline.com>



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