

The **IMPACT** of **COVID-19** on *Minorities*



Although everyone is at risk for developing COVID-19, minorities are at a greater risk for developing complications and death regardless of age due to health and social inequities. According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, as of June 12, 2020, the adjusted hospitalization rates are 5 times higher in blacks and American Indians compared to Non-Hispanic Whites. This disparity is also evident in Alabama, in which blacks are twenty-seven percent of the population, and yet they represent fifty-five percent of the COVID-19 related

deaths in Alabama.

Who is at high risk for developing complications from COVID-19?

People who have underlying medical conditions including:

- Heart disease
- Lung disease
- Cancer
- People with weakened immune systems from medical condition or treatment such as chemotherapy
- High blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Older adults (65 years and older)

If you or your loved ones have the above chronic conditions, it is better to avoid the following situations:



Closed environment with poor ventilation (inside a room with no open windows or open doors) and not wearing a mask



Mass gatherings with many people which makes social distancing impossible.



Close contact settings in which you are interacting with others who are less than 6 ft apart and not wearing a mask.

IMMUNE BOOSTERS

Our immune system helps us to fight off infections. We can improve our immune system by implementing the following lifestyle changes:



Nutrition - Make sure to eat a healthy balance diet which includes a variety of fruits and veggies. Limit foods that do not have any nutritional benefits, such as, foods that contains excessive sugar, salt, and saturated fats.

Exercise - Regular exercise strengthens your heart, lowers your blood pressure, improves your circulation, and elevates your mood. It is recommended that you perform at least 30 minutes of moderate physical activity 5 days per week or 150 minutes per week for an optimal level of health and wellness.



Water - Drinking plenty of water (6-8 glasses) daily is good for your overall health because it delivers oxygen throughout your body to enable your body's systems to work properly. It also removes toxins and other bacteria from the body that may cause illness.



Sunshine - Is a natural source of vitamin D that is good for your bones, blood cells, and immune system. Vitamin D is important to ensure proper function of T cells, the body's first line of defense in the immune system. To ensure that you get enough Vitamin D from sunlight, spend between 10 -30 minutes outside daily.

Temperance - Research suggests that the immune system can be weakened by smoking, consuming alcohol, and poor nutrition.



Air- Fresh air strengthens your immune system by increasing the amount of oxygen in your body. Oxygen helps the white blood cells to function properly by fighting and killing bacteria and germs.

Rest - Sleep improves the immune system's ability to fight off infection such as virus, flu, and cancer cells. Adequate sleep is necessary to achieve your optimal level of health and wellness. For adults, 7-9 hours of sleep are recommended.



Trust in Divine Power - God says in his Word, "Don't worry about anything; instead pray about everything. Tell God what you need and thank him for all he has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand." Phil. 4:6,7.

Additional Tips to reduce your risk of COVID-19



- Wear a mask to cover your **nose and mouth** when in the community.
- Social distance- keep at least 6 feet of space between yourself and others who do not reside in your household.



- Stay home if you are sick.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer which contains at least 60% alcohol.

Victoria Batiste, MPH, MS OTR/L
Oakwood University Church Health Ministries