

Video: Hypertension and cardiovascular disease in the Black community

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February is American Heart Month. Cardiovascular disease is the leading cause of death in the U.S. African Americans are significantly affected by heart disease, resulting in higher mortality rates compared to white Americans.

One of the reasons for the disparity is due to high hypertension rates in the Black community. Hypertension, also known as high blood pressure, can increase your risk of developing heart disease.

Dr. LaPrincess Brewer, a Mayo Clinic cardiologist, discusses cardiovascular disease and reversing the disturbing trend.

The statistics are startling. One person dies every 33 seconds from [cardiovascular disease](#) in the United States. High cholesterol, obesity, diabetes and hypertension can cause heart problems.

"African Americans, unfortunately, have the highest rates of uncontrolled hypertension in the world, which dramatically increases their risk for developing heart disease," says Dr. Brewer.

Black Americans disproportionately impacted by cardiovascular disease

She says elevated hypertension rates in the Black community can be attributed to various factors, including chronic stress, systemic racism and socioeconomic issues.

"That includes [food insecurity](#), housing insecurity, redlining, which really limits certain individuals from receiving opportunities and resources to better their health," explains Dr. Brewer.

Dr. Brewer says simple lifestyle changes can reduce [high blood pressure](#) and heart disease, like eating healthier, getting regular physical activity and adequate sleep to reduce stress.

Provided by Mayo Clinic

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