

# State of the Heart for African Americans

## Heart Disease in South Carolina

### Burden of Disease:

- In the United States, 76,608 African Americans died from heart disease in 2016. Heart disease is a leading cause of death and disability for Americans.<sup>1</sup> The most common form of heart disease in the United States is coronary heart disease, which can lead to heart attack.<sup>2</sup>
- Heart disease was the leading cause of death in South Carolina for 2017.
- During 2017, 2,739 African Americans died from heart disease in South Carolina.
- African Americans face a higher risk of developing ischemic heart disease, and suffer stroke deaths more often than Caucasians.
- In 2017, heart disease accounted for 16,302 hospitalizations of African American South Carolinians, with total hospitalization charges of more than \$940 million.

### Risk Factors for South Carolinians:

#### Smoking

- Cigarette smokers have a 70 percent greater chance of dying of heart disease than nonsmokers.<sup>3</sup>
- Eighteen percent of African American adults in South Carolina smoke compared to 18.9% among Caucasians.

#### Overweight and Obese

- Being overweight increases the risk of heart disease by 32 percent.<sup>4</sup>
- Seventy-six percent of African Americans in South Carolina are overweight or obese. For African American women, the number is three out of every four.

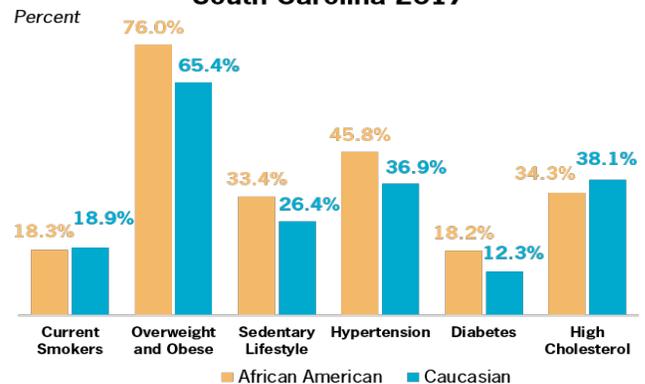
#### Sedentary Lifestyle

- Regular physical activity could reduce one's risk of having high blood pressure by nearly 20 percent.<sup>5</sup>
- In South Carolina, 57 percent of African Americans do not get the recommended amount of physical activity.
- Physical inactivity is more common among African American women than men.

#### Hypertension (High Blood Pressure)

- People with uncontrolled hypertension are three times more likely to die from heart disease.<sup>6</sup>
- Two in five African Americans in South Carolina have high blood pressure.

Heart Disease Risk Factors by Race,  
South Carolina 2017



Data Source: South Carolina Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System  
Note: Adults 18+

#### Diabetes

- Adults with diabetes are two to four times more likely to have heart disease than adults without diabetes.<sup>7</sup>
- One out of every five African American adults in South Carolina has diabetes, which is 47 percent higher than the rate for Caucasian adults.

#### High Cholesterol

- People with high blood cholesterol have about twice the risk of heart disease as people with lower levels.<sup>8</sup>
- One out of every three African American adults in South Carolina has high cholesterol.

# Stroke Among African Americans

## in South Carolina



### Burden of Disease for South Carolinians:

- Stroke is a leading cause of serious, long-term disability in the United States.
- According to 2017 national data, South Carolina had the sixth highest stroke death rate in the nation and is part of the “Stroke Belt,” a group of Southeastern states with high stroke death rates.
- Stroke is the third leading cause of death for African Americans in South Carolina, resulting in 776 deaths during 2017.
- African Americans in South Carolina are 43 percent more likely to die from stroke than their Caucasian counterparts.
- Stroke resulted in 5,213 hospitalizations for African Americans in South Carolina in 2017. Of these, 51 percent were less than 65 years old.

### Risk Factors for Stroke:

- High blood pressure
- Cigarette smoking
- Diabetes
- Heart disease
- Unhealthy diet
- Physical inactivity

### How to Reduce Your Risk of Stroke:

- Get your blood pressure checked.
- Stay active.
- Eat a healthy diet.
- Use less salt.
- If you drink alcohol, drink in moderation.
- Get your cholesterol level checked.
- Stay smoke-free.

### Warning Signs of Stroke:

- Sudden weakness or numbness of the face, arm or leg on one side of the body.
- Loss of speech or trouble talking or understanding speech.
- Sudden dimness or loss of vision, particularly in one eye.
- Unexplained dizziness, unsteadiness or sudden falls, with no previous symptoms.
- Sudden, severe headaches with no known cause.

### Economic Cost of Stroke:

- Hospitalization charges for stroke totaled more than \$357 million for African American South Carolinians in 2017.

**For more information on cardiovascular disease prevention in South Carolina contact:** Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention, Division of Diabetes and Heart Disease Management, (803) 898-0868

Data Sources: S.C. BFSS, S.C. Vital Statistics, S.C. Hospital Discharge  
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