

# Blacks At Greater Risk For AIDS

**Special To The Post**  
**The National**  
**Assoc. of Black Americans**  
 There are two AIDS epidemics in America today, amongst whites, AIDS was largely a disease of gay men, but fully half of blacks and other minority people with AIDS are heterosexual.

In minority communities this epidemic has breached its original boundaries. A black woman is 11 times more likely than a white woman to contact AIDS.

As far as civil rights is concerned, unless we can interrupt the high rate of transmission of this disease "we may be looking at the grim specter of zero population growth for blacks not only in this country, but on this planet as we know it now."

Dr. Beny Primm, a black in Harlem who runs the Urban Re-

source Program that treats intravenous drug users (IVDU), states, "I'm going to lose 5,000 people in Manhattan and Brooklyn." These numbers are "awesome" and the victims are going to be minorities predominantly.

"Denial" is one of our major concerns, it is this mechanism that is at work in our community. "People know it's there, but they don't realize they are at risk. And they exclude themselves."

A "color blind" message has its merits, and no one wants to start talking numbers and percentages, because blacks and other minorities have always carried a disproportionate share of the blame for this country's ills. But sending out a "color blind" message has its own dangers, because no one is asking about the quality of care for black and minority patients,

where are they going to get the \$8,000 to \$10,000 each year to buy the medicine they will need? How are the hospitals with mostly white administrators and medical personnel going to respond to an increasing number of minority AIDS patients?

Dr. Rudolph E. Jackson of the Morehouse College of Medicine says, "There's no question in my mind that black people should be told that they are at greater risk."

It is late, but there is still time and the black leadership, like Paul Revere must ride back to their communities, ride back to their homes, to their churches, their organizations and, yes, to their husbands, brothers, sisters, lovers, friends and children and sound the alarm. For if you don't, they will become at risk because of our laxity.

Call the CDC in Atlanta and you'll be told "there is no sub-section of the AIDS program, that deals with minority issues. We're not parochial here." No blacks or Hispanics works full time on AIDS at the CDC.

AIDS is a subject that has been swept under the rug in our community. We cannot, and we must not allow it to remain there. We must not be concerned with the Russians who have proclaimed that AIDS is spread by "foreigners of African descent" or the United Kingdom's pronouncement that AIDS is spread by people from certain areas of the world.

The black leadership in America must rally to address this most urgent of issues to confront black Americans since the days of slavery and Jim Crow.

## Area Churches To Hold Blood Pressure Screenings

During May many Charlotte area churches will be holding blood pressure screenings for their congregations as encouraged by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Heart Association, said David Dowdy, MD, chairperson of the association's Hypertension Subcommittee.

During April, the Heart Association, under the leadership of David Dowdy, Carol Fray, RN, and the Rev. Burrell Brooks has held a blood pressure monitoring workshop to train interested church members in taking blood pressures. The church members will return to their churches to hold screenings during May. The Heart Association will also supply education literature for use during the screenings.

Dr. Dowdy said that high blood pressure, also called hypertension, is a peculiar disease because it usually does not have any symptoms and the only way to detect it is by having a blood pressure check during a medical examination. "A person can look and feel terrific and still have high blood pressure. And that's where the risk lies, because uncontrolled high blood pressure can lead to stroke, heart attack, and heart or kidney failure," he explains.

"In fact, the lack of understanding of the consequences of high blood pressure is one of the major reasons why people don't think of it as a serious disease."

**OTHER MISUNDERSTANDINGS**  
 For most ailments, people are in

the habit of getting "cured" if they are taking proper medicines. Unfortunately, a majority of high blood pressure cases cannot be "cured," they can only be controlled. If patients discontinue medication because their blood pressure is back to normal, it is

### Arthritis: Coping With Pain

Do you feel that you could manage your arthritis if it weren't for the unrelenting pain? Learning to cope with chronic (long lasting) pain may be the toughest part of living with arthritis.

Your arthritis and your pain vary from time to time. A neighbor with the same kind of arthritis may feel a different kind of pain. Everyone's arthritis pain is different. There are no easy answers or

likely to go up again, adds Dr. Dowdy. The reduction of uncontrolled high blood pressure and associated risk factors is one of the major programs of the AHA, who encourages area churches to hold screenings during May to alert their congregations to this disease.

### Arthritis: Coping With Pain

magic solutions for relieving arthritis pain. What may be very helpful The Arthritis Foundation offers a booklet entitled "Coping With Pain." You probably won't need to try all the suggested ways to control pain, but through trial and error, we hope that you will discover some ways that will work for you. For your free copy of "Coping With Pain," call Arthritis Answerline, toll-free, at 1-800-422-1492.

## Cervical Cancer High Among Non-Whites

Raleigh - State Health Director Dr. Donald H. Levine announced recently that \$69,000 in state funds will be awarded to 23 local health departments to help determine the reasons why a higher rate of non-white women are dying from cervical cancer.

"There were 779 women in this state who died from cervical cancer from 1981 to 1985. About 43 percent of them were non-white," said Levine. "That's high when you consider that only 25 percent of this state's female population is non-white."

Dr. Georjean Stoodt, chief of the Adult Health Services, said that the funds would be used by the 23 local health departments to help determine the reasons for, and to plan solutions to this disproportionately higher rate among non-white women.

"If we can better understand the causes—possible lack of regular checkups, failure to get diagnosis or treatment, transportation problems, or some other reasons—then we can more effectively help reduce North Carolina's rate," explained Stoodt. "Deaths from cervical cancer are nearly 100 percent preventable."

She noted that the counties receiving the funds were selected based on the rate of non-white women who died from cervical cancer and the number and percentage of non-white females currently residing in the counties. Each county will receive \$3,000.

Counties receiving the funds are: Anson, Bertie, Durham, Edgecombe, Granville, Greene, Guilford, Halifax, Hertford, Hyde, Jones, Lenoir, Martin, Mecklenburg, Northampton, Pamlico, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Pitt, Richmond, Sampson, Scotland and Washington.

Stoodt pointed out that there are factors that put some women at a higher risk for cervical cancer such as family history; multiple sex partners; some types of genital infections; cigarette smoking and others.

"Cervical cancer is fairly easy to detect," Stoodt said. "In fact, abnormal changes on the pap smear can be found before cancer develops, and proper treatment can prevent these changes from progressing to cancer."

She noted that physicians and health officials generally recommend that women should get pap smears annually once they are sexually active or as advised by their physician.

Pap smears are available through personal physicians and most local health departments.

Stoodt said that in addition to the cervical cancer project, the agency's Cancer Control Program would be examining activities that can help lower the rates of other forms of cancer.



Rev. Brooks



## Community Spirit

Pipper Byrum and Willie Stephen are promoting community spirit for Sunday for Seniors on May 3. The goals of this event are to raise funds for the Senior Center and to focus on the contributions of older Americans. The one, two, or three mile walk starting at 2 PM in Marshall Park is for all ages.

The Senior Center in uptown Charlotte and its two satellite locations serve thousands of older adults from 21 zip codes. Willie Stephen is program assistant, and board member Pipper Byrum chairs the walk.

Republic Bank joins many local business firms in sponsoring Sunday for Seniors. "Republic shows community spirit," says Pipper, "and I feel that we as individuals and businesses have an obligation to give something back to our community."

Fifteen years ago when the first office of Republic Bank opened on Kings Drive, Willie was one of the first customers. She says, "I came because Republic is open on Saturday and during the week until 6 PM. I think Republic is marvelous, especially the people."

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The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Senior Center is sponsoring a 3 week Health Care Training Program for those 55 & Older and residents of Mecklenburg County. We are seeking men & women who are caring, reliable, and interested in employment in the medical field. Uniforms will be provided for qualified students. Classes begin May 11, 1987 Call Barbara Barrett at 334-3056

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**We're Doing Our Part To Keep Black History Alive By Naming Our Menu Items After Our Black Neighborhoods**

<b>French Fries:</b>	McDowell Street The Heart Of The Black Employment with Mecklenburg Laundry located here. Also home of the House of Prayer, St. Paul Baptist Church and El Chico Restaurant.
<b>BLT:</b>	Blue Heaven Had More Than It's Share of Shotgun houses
<b>Salmon Croquet &amp; Egg:</b>	Biddleville, Early Black Neighborhood of Infulence. Led to later development of West Charlotte, and Northwest schools. Poplar H.F. Club was a favorite to see big name entertainers
<b>Fatback &amp; Egg:</b>	Pearl Street, For Years the only playground for blacks, popular for baseball games. Bordered Second Ward High School

EGG SANDWICH.....	GRADY COLE
LIVER MUSH.....	WEST BLVD.
FATBACK SANDWICH.....	GRIER TOWN
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