

Health Emergency Declaration Series

Multiple Myeloma Health-at-a-Glance

What is Multiple Myeloma?

Multiple myeloma is an incurable blood cancer of the plasma cells, a type of white blood cell found in the bone marrow. This disease can lead to bone problems including pain, fractures and spinal cord compression, when cancer cells wear away the bone.

Symptoms of Bone Problems in Multiple Myeloma

The most common symptom of bone problems is pain. It is often hard to tell bone pain from other conditions such as arthritis or ordinary lower back pain. Other symptoms include:

- Bones breaking easily without an obvious cause.
- Loss of appetite, nausea, thirst, fatigue, muscle weakness, restlessness and confusion.
- Problems with bowels or bladder or numbness in the abdominal area.



Multiple Myeloma Facts

- African Americans are disproportionately affected they are more than twice as likely to be diagnosed with multiple myeloma as their Caucasian counterparts.
- In the US, multiple myeloma is the second most common blood cancer and an estimated 70,000 Americans are living with the disease. Men are more likely than women to have multiple myeloma and it is more common among the elderly.
- Multiple myeloma was the ninth most commonly diagnosed cancer among African American men and the seventh most commonly diagnosed cancer among African American women, from 2003 to 2007.

Talk to your doctor about your bone health.
If you are concerned about your bone health, go over your risk factors with your doctor and ask if you should get a bone density test.

To Stay in the Game, Maintain Your Frame

For patients with multiple myeloma, bone problems can be devastating so it is critical to for people to engage in the following:

- **Eat a well-balanced diet enriched with calcium and vitamin D.**
Some people may also need to consider taking nutritional supplements in order to get enough calcium and vitamin D in their diets.
- **Get plenty of physical activity.**
Like muscles, bones become stronger with exercise. The best exercises for healthy bones are strength-building and weight-bearing – about 30 minutes a day is best.
- **Live a healthy lifestyle.**
Avoid smoking, and, if you choose to drink alcohol, try not to drink too much.
- **Prevent falls.**
Most falls can be prevented - check your home for dangers like loose rugs and poor lighting. Have your vision checked.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, TALK WITH YOUR DOCTOR OR VISIT THE FOLLOWING WEBSITES:

Cancer Care
www.Cancercare.org
National Cancer Institute
www.cancer.gov

Patient Advocate Foundation
www.patientadvocate.org

International Myeloma Foundation
www.myeloma.org
Multiple Myeloma Research Foundation
www.themmr.org
Bone and Cancer Foundation
www.boneandcancerfoundation.org
American Cancer Society
www.cancer.org

With support
provided by:



Please visit www.naltblackchurch.com for more information.