

APPEAL Brochure References

A Closer Look at Health Disparities in AA and NHPI Communities

Asian American, Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities face a disproportionate impact from tobacco and obesity-related diseases. The three risk factors of tobacco, unhealthy eating and physical inactivity are responsible for nearly 80% of premature heart disease and 40% of some cancersⁱ. Root causes such as socioeconomic and political inequities can also adversely impact health status. In addition, the tobacco and agri-food industries play an important role in marketing and selling harmful products to AA and NHPI communities.

- Males in certain AA and NHPI ethnic subgroups (e.g., Laotian, Samoan, Cambodian) have some of the highest prevalence of smoking in the U.S.ⁱⁱ
- Tobacco use is very high among both male and female Native Hawaiians and other Pacific Islanders. In some Pacific Island jurisdictions, chewing tobacco is commonly mixed with betel nutⁱⁱⁱ.
- Tobacco is the number one preventable cause of death for all groups, including AAs and NHPs.
- Tobacco industry documents have revealed that tobacco companies have historically targeted their deadly products to AA and NHPI communities both in the U.S. and overseas^{iv}.
- The use of mentholated tobacco is particularly high among NHs and PIs and some AA groups, as well as among youth from these communities.
- Native Hawaiians face higher mortality rates for heart disease, 4.7 times higher than all races in Hawai`i^v.
- In Hawai`i, communities with a higher proportion of Native Hawaiians have a greater abundance of fast food outlets and the fewest exercise facilities per 10,000 people^{vi}.
- More than 75% of Pacific Islanders (including Native Hawaiians and Samoans) in Hawai`i are overweight or obese^{vii}.
- The highest levels of obesity in the world can be found in the Pacific Islands. Rates of overweight and obese persons were reported to be over 75% in the populations of Nauru, Samoa, American Samoa, and Tonga^{viii}.
- Among AA and NHPI subgroups, Vietnamese, Koreans, Native Hawaiians and Pacific Islanders have the highest levels of physical inactivity^{ix}. Asian Americans appear to be at greater risk for cardiovascular disease (CVD) at a lower body mass index (BMI) than other ethnic groups^x.

ⁱ World Health Organization, Unhealthy Diets and Physical Inactivity. Available at: http://www.who.int/nmh/publications/fact_sheet_diet_en.pdf.

ⁱⁱ New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services, Office of Minority Health. *The health of minorities in New Jersey, Part III: Asian American Forum on Health*. Trenton, NJ: New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services, Office of Minority Health; 2000.

APPEAL Brochure References

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^{iv} Muggli ME, Pollay RW, Lew R, Joseph AM. Targeting of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders by the tobacco industry: results from the Minnesota Tobacco Document Depository. *Tob Control*. 2002;11:201-209.

^v National Institutes of Health. Addressing Cardiovascular Health in Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders: A Background Report. Available at: <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/prof/heart/other/aapibkgd/aapibkgd.pdf>.

^{vi} Mau MK, Wong KN, Efird J, West M, Saito EP, Maddock J. Environmental factors of obesity in communities with Native Hawaiians. *Hawaii Med J*. September 2008;67(9):233-236.

^{vii} Davis J, Busch J, Hammatt Z, Novotny R, Harrigan R, Grandinetti A, Easa D. The relationship between ethnicity and obesity in Asian and Pacific Islander populations: a literature review. *Ethn Dis*. 2004 Winter;14(1):111-8.

^{viii} World Health Organization, Regional Office for the Western Pacific. Diet, Food Supply and Obesity in the Pacific. Available at: http://www.wpro.who.int/NR/rdonlyres/9FEF63D8-B0EA-47D4-A394-7F7E171427EB/0/diet_food_supply_obesity.pdf.

^{ix} Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, Division of Health Interview Statistics. Health Characteristics of the Asian Adult Population: United States, 2004-2006. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/ad/ad394.pdf>.

^x Harrison GG, Kagawa-Singer M, Foerster SB, Lee H, Pham Kim L, Nguyen TU, Fernandez-Ami A, Quinn V, Bal DG. Seizing the moment: California's opportunity to prevent nutrition-related health disparities in low-income Asian American populations. *Cancer*. December 2005;104(12 Suppl):2962-8.