



PAN-AFRICAN

MANAGED CARE

# Men's Health Month

June 2023



# Men's Health Months - June 2023

Macho Month! As we celebrate Fathers this month, we also zoom into men's health in general. A statement from the South African government for the month of June states:

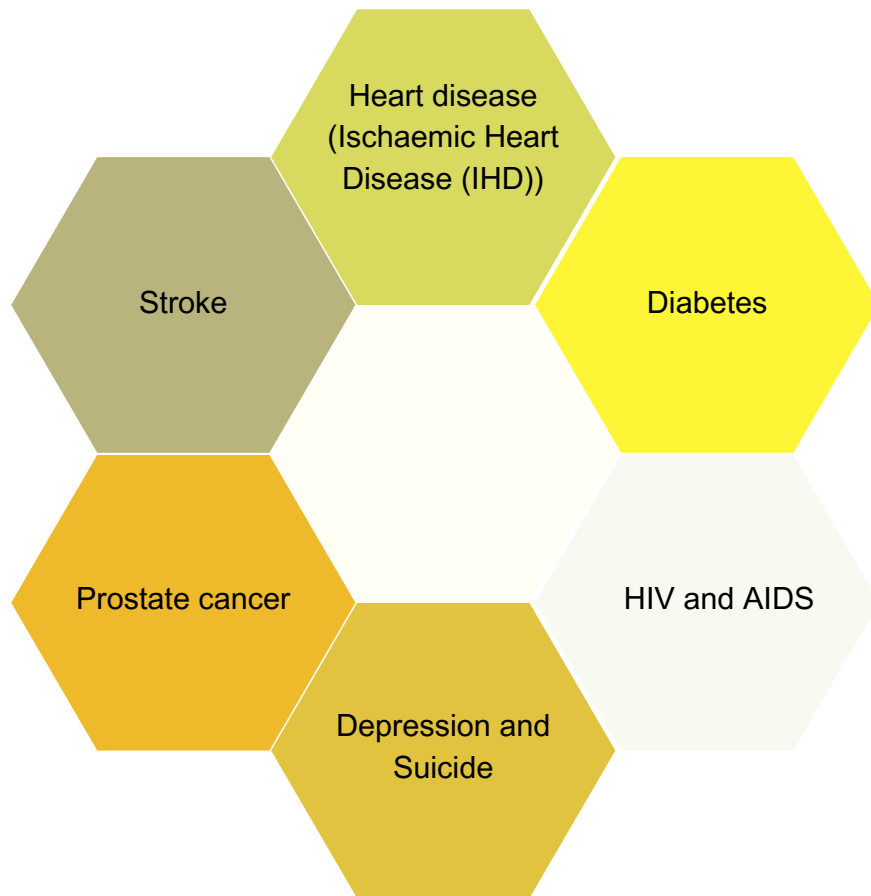
*"The objective of Men's Health Month is to heighten awareness of preventable health problems and encourage early detection and treatment of disease among men and boys. This month allows healthcare providers, public policymakers, the media, and individuals to encourage men and boys to seek regular medical advice and prompt treatment for disease and injury. The response has been overwhelming with thousands of awareness activities around the globe."*



## Major men's health issues

Traditionally, men are perceived to be physically stronger than women. Unfortunately, research has shown that men are likely to experience chronic health conditions sooner than women. Research shows that heart disease and stroke are the leading killers in South Africa. We note that some men struggle to look after their mental and physical health which results in serious health issues and early death. Men's Health Month motivates men to prioritise prevention, especially of the following common health conditions and causes:

# Common Health Conditions and Causes in Men



## Suggested tests to be taken to maintain good health:

- Prostate cancer: This should be checked for after you turn 50, or after 40 if you have a family history of prostate cancer. It may include a digital rectal exam and a Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) blood test.
- Testicular cancer: All men should have a testicular exam when seeing the doctor for a routine check-up. You can also do regular self-exams, checking for hard lumps, bumps, or any changes in size and shape.
- Colon cancer: You can do this test after 50, which involves a colonoscopy. It is painless and takes only about 15 minutes.
- HIV test: Take one regularly and be sure of your status.
- Eye test: An annual test is recommended, and make sure you are checked for glaucoma, especially after you turn forty.



## General steps in improving your well-being:

- Exercising and staying active
- Eating healthy
- Having a primary care provider for visits
- Go for screening tests

## Mental Health in Men

The South African Society of Psychiatrists (SASOP) has urged men to speak up before it is too late, considering Men's health month in June. This comes after a shocking revelation that showed that men are most likely to commit suicide than women in South Africa. According to a statement from SASOP.

“Men are five times more likely to die by suicide than women and often use more aggressive methods. Although surveys reveal that women are diagnosed more than men with mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety, men do not speak about their feelings until it is too late,”. The SASOP added that men underplay the distress caused by these symptoms drowning their depression and anxiety with poor coping behaviours, increasing their risk of anxiety or depression going unrecognised and untreated.

The statement also shed light on toxic masculinity which is how society expects men to ‘man up’ and adopt the ‘boys don’t cry’ mentality. For instance, a statement such as “It is this attitude of men portrayed as being brave and fearless that leads to men considering themselves in a negative light if they suffer from mental health conditions. And for this very reason, they see it as putting themselves in a vulnerable position when seeking help,”

Men have been urged to get seek help or seek help for those close to them by contacting the South African Depression and Anxiety Group on 0800 121 314, or by sending an SMS to 32312. You may also contact the South African Depression and Anxiety Group on 0800 121 314, or send an SMS to 32312 and a counsellor will call you back.

## Mental Health Help Resources

- Public mental health treatment options:
  - o <https://www.groundup.org.za/article/how-access-public-mental-health-services>
- Mental health counselling free of charge:
  - o <https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/ways-south-africans-take-care-of-mental-health/>
- Sadag suicide help line and other helplines:
  - o <https://www.sadag.org/>
- Start or join a support group / support group directory:
  - o [https://www.sadag.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=3118&Itemid=193\\_](https://www.sadag.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=3118&Itemid=193_)



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3. <https://www.iol.co.za/lifestyle/health/mind/suicide-crisis-soars-in-sa-a-look-at-men-in-the-entertainment-industry-who-lost-their-lives-to-suicide-63e0db0a-536e-4fe8-9d69-ff4ebb82a6ff>
4. Affleck, W., Carmichael V., Whitley R. (2018). Men's Mental Health: Social Determinants and Implications for Services. The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry Vol. 63(9) 581-589counsellor will call back.
5. US Preventative Medicine - <https://www.uspm.com/celebrate-mens-health-month/>