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If you would like additional information, or to have your name removed from our mailing list please contact us by telephone at (734) 615-1404 or by e-mail at [pmch@med.umich.edu](mailto:pmch@med.umich.edu)

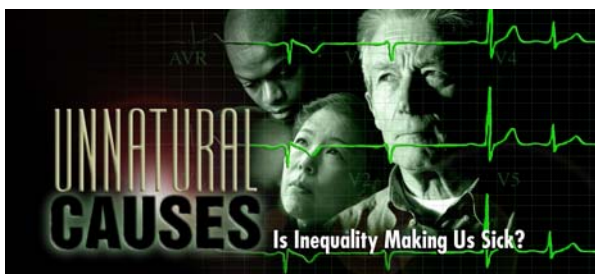
***UNNATURAL CAUSES Is inequality making us sick?  
A Seven part documentary series exploring racial and socioeconomic inequalities in health***

UNNATURAL CAUSES criss-crossed the country investigating the stories and findings that are shaking up conventional notions about what makes us healthy or sick. It turns out there's much more to our well-being than genes, behaviors and medical care. The social, economic, and physical environments in which we are born, live and work profoundly affect our longevity and health – as much as smoking, diet and exercise.

The series sheds light on mounting evidence of how lack of access to power and resources can get under the skin and disrupt human biology as surely as germs and viruses. It also reveals a health gradient tied to wealth: those at the top of the class pyramid average longer, healthier lives, while those at the bottom are the most disempowered, get sicker more often and die sooner. Most of us fall somewhere in between.

Compelling personal stories illustrate obstacles and inequities in society but they also point the way to new possibilities, as individuals and communities organize to gain control over their destinies and their health.

As Harvard epidemiologist David Williams points out in the film, investing in our schools, improving housing, integrating neighborhoods, better jobs and wages, giving people more control over their work – these are as much health strategies as disease prevention and education efforts.



The Program for Multicultural Health staff includes specialists in:

- Diet/Nutrition
- Physical Activity
- Cultural Competency
- Community Health Education
- Social Work
- Public Health

If you are interested in watching the video or for more information:

- Check your local PBS station listing for times.
- Contact your local library, health department or hospital.
- Download half-hour iTUNES podcasts at:  
<http://www.unnaturalcauses.org/assets/xml/unnaturalcauses.xml>
- Visit the UNNATURAL CAUSES YOUTUBE channel:  
<http://www.youtube.com/user/unnaturalcausesdoc>
- The program for Multicultural Health (PMCH) has the video available for you to view at our office. Please call first to make an appointment.

Source: Unnatural Causes. <http://www.unnaturalcauses.org/> Accessed 7/1/2008.

## *Muslim Patient Care Committee (MPCC)*

By Jacqueline Dieball, M.S.S.A., Manager, Program for Multicultural Health

Islam has become the fastest growing religion in the United States during the past few decades. Demographers estimate that over eight million Muslims live in the United States, making Muslims the second largest religious community in the country. Michigan serves as the home of one of the oldest Muslim communities in the nation, estimated at almost half a million. Ann Arbor itself has several thousand Muslims.

In the fall of 2000, the Muslim Patient Care Committee was established after the local Muslim Health Association approached the University of Michigan Health System (UMHS) for support with projects that could enable these two organizations to collaborate in providing quality, culturally competent health care that addresses the unique needs of Muslims in our increasingly diverse community.

Chaired by the UMHS Program for Multicultural Health, the mission of the Muslim Patient Care Committee is "to develop programs within the University of Michigan Health System that will enhance the culturally competent care received by Muslim patients and meet the religious needs and customs of Muslims." One example of meeting the religious needs of Muslims is the MPCC's establishment of a Friday prayer room within the University Hospital.

Jumma', also known as Friday prayer, is a congregational prayer that Muslims hold every Friday, just after noon in lieu of dhuhr (the second of the five daily prayers of Islam). Jumma' is obligatory for men and preferable for women to perform in congregation. With no hospital location formally designated for Jumma', many UMHS Muslim patients, visitors, and employees were either not able to congregate for prayer or traveled to the local masjid, only if they had permission, time, transportation and the ability. Aware of these challenges and wanting to support the religious practices of Muslims, the MPCC successfully collaborated with the UMHS Facilities Planning and Development department to establish and sustain a secluded and regular Friday prayer room with no or moveable furniture, allowing for participants to kneel. Muslim patients, visitors, and employees have continued to express their gratitude for this effective Friday prayer room. UMHS, the Program for Multicultural Health and the Muslim Patient Care Committee are pleased to create a more culturally appropriate environment and make a Michigan difference.

Some of the other MPCC accomplishments during the past eight years include:

- Implementing and evaluating use of a "Knock - Await" Response door sign with the Obstetrics & Gynecology departments
- Writing a *Same Gender Care* policy with the Obstetrics & Gynecology departments; translating the policy into Arabic; and periodically revisiting the policy for implementation
- Addressing the dietary needs of patients, visitors, and employees
- Establishing an Islamic volunteer service program
- Providing Islamic in-service trainings for employees
- Creating a *Caring for a Dying or Deceased Muslim Patient* guide (available on the MPCC [Webpage](#))
- Developing and distributing a *Services for the Muslim Patient* brochure (available on the MPCC [Webpage](#))
- Assessing and determining the expressed need to offer a more modest hospital gown to Muslim patients



Symbol of the faith of Islam

For additional information about the Muslim Patient Care Committee, please visit the Program for Multicultural Health Website at [www.med.umich.edu/multicultural/ccp/muslim.htm](http://www.med.umich.edu/multicultural/ccp/muslim.htm) or call 734-615-1404.

Garamone, J. Islam is the Fastest Growing Religion in the United States. Defend America. U.S. Department of Defense News about the War on Terrorism website. October 4, 2001. Available at: <http://www.defendamerica.mil/articles/a100501b.html>. Accessed July 10, 2008.

Smith, J. Patterns of Muslim Immigration. U.S Department of State's Bureau of International Information Programs Web site. Available at: <http://usinfo.state.gov/products/pubs/muslimlife/immigrat.htm>. Accessed July 10, 2008.

Arab American Demographics. Arab American Institute website. Available at: <http://www.aaiusa.org/arab-americans/22/demographics>. Accessed Sept 9, 2008.

## *Upcoming events, conferences and other relevant information*

### *National Multicultural Conference & Summit 2009*

#### *Advancing Our Communities: The Role of Social Justice in Multicultural Psychology*

The objective of the 2009 NMCS is to promote social justice and psychological well-being for historically marginalized communities, as well as to explore links and tensions between social justice and multicultural psychology.

Date: January 15–16, 2009

Location: New Orleans, LA

Hosted by four divisions of the American Psychological Association

For more information go to: <http://www.multiculturalsummit.org/>

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### *30th Annual Minority Health Conference, Our World, Our Community: Building Bridges for Health Equality*

Major objectives are to highlight health issues of concern to people of color and to attract students interested in minority health to the University of North Carolina, School of Public Health.

Keynote Lecture will be broadcast by satellite and Internet at 2:00-3:30pm EST on February 27, 2009 (free downlink, live questions and discussion)

On-line registration opens October 23

Presented by the University of North Carolina, School of Public Health Minority Student Caucus in collaboration with the North Carolina Institute for Public Health and the University of North Carolina School of Public Health Dean's Office

For more information go to: <http://www.minority.unc.edu/sph/minconf/2009/>

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### *Obesity Rates Rises in 37 States. Obesity Rates Now Exceed 25 Percent in More Than Half of States*

Adult obesity rates increased in 37 states in the past year, according to the fifth annual *F as in Fat: How Obesity Policies Are Failing in America*, 2008 report from the Trust for America's Health (TFAH) and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF). Rates rose for a second consecutive year in 24 states and for a third consecutive year in 19 states. No state saw a decrease. Though many promising policies have emerged to promote physical activity and good nutrition in communities, the report concludes that they are not being adopted or implemented at levels needed to turn around this health crisis.

Some key policy recommendations include:

- Investing in effective community-based disease-prevention programs that promote increased physical activity and good nutrition;
- Improving the nutritional quality of foods available in schools and childcare programs;
- Increasing the amount and quality of physical education and activity in schools and childcare programs;
- Increasing access to safe, accessible places for physical activity in communities.

To access the full report go to: <http://www.rwjf.org/newsroom/product.jsp?id=33711&c=EMC-CA138>

- In addition we suggest taking into consideration the psychological, social and cultural implications in excessive eating.

New Report: Adult Obesity Rates Rise in 37 States, Obesity Rates Now Exceed 25 Percent in More Than Half of States. Robert Wood Johnson Website. Available at: <http://www.rwjf.org/newsroom/product.jsp?id=33711&c=EMC-CA138>. Accessed September 15, 2008



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## Resources

These are some of the resources available at the Program for Multicultural Health:

### **Training and Workshops**

The Program for Multicultural Health (PMCH) trains individuals, groups or agencies on strategies to improve the health of multicultural populations. These are some sample topics:

- **Cultural Strategic Plans:** Strategic plans involve a three-step process to assist patient-provider cultural challenges that are unique to health care departments.

- **Grocery Store Tours:** Participants acquire the basic skills to purchase healthier and affordable culturally appropriate foods.
- **Physical Activity:** Organizational members will be trained in the basics of physical activity, how to develop a culturally appropriate program and tips to keep activities going year round.
- **Video Lending Library:** The videos are one-hour presentations on a variety of health topics and cultures that can be used as an informal training.

PMCH can assist in coordinate workshops on:

- Introduction to Cultural Competency
- Advocacy Tools to Improve the Health of Multicultural Groups
- A Cultural Approach to Weight Management
- Cultural/Religious Influences on Stress Management
- Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) Standards in Health Care
- Culture and Food
- Health Disparities: What are they and why do they Exist?
- Physical Activity among Diverse Cultural Groups