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Stroke Mortality declines in Multnomah County

Mortality rates decline but remain higher than U.S. rates

Cerebrovascular disease, also known as stroke, is one of the leading causes of death in the United States. Although stroke death rates have declined 15% in Multnomah County in the last decade, they remain higher than rates for Oregon and the U.S. The rate in Multnomah County in 2005 was 60 deaths per 100,000 population. In Oregon it was 55 deaths per 100,000 population and nationally the rate was 47 deaths per 100,000 population.

A new report issued by Multnomah County Health Department, "Cerebrovascular Disease (Stroke) Mortality," found:

- Stroke is the third leading cause of death among both males and females in Multnomah County.
- The greatest risk factor for stroke mortality is advanced age. 78% of strokes occur in adults age 75 and older.
- Stroke mortality rates have declined for African Americans, White non-Hispanics and Hispanics.
- Hispanics are the only group that has met the Healthy People 2010 Objective to reduce stroke mortality to no more than 48 deaths per 100,000 population.

The greatest disparity in stroke mortality occurs in younger adults. Among 45-54 and 55-64 age groups, the stroke mortality rate was 3.5 times higher for African Americans than for White non-Hispanics. In the 65-74 year age group the stroke mortality rate was 2.2 times higher.

Prevention efforts to reduce the risk of stroke include:

- High blood pressure screening
- Cholesterol screening
- Quitting smoking
- Exercising regularly
- Consuming alcohol in moderation
- Maintaining a healthy body weight

According to Health Department Director Lillian Shirley, "We can address these disparities in stroke mortality through comprehensive prevention efforts, from helping individuals to receive appropriate and timely health screenings to addressing community-wide barriers that make it harder for all us to make healthy choices, such as increasing access to healthy, affordable food."

The full report is available online at:

<http://www.co.multnomah.or.us/health/hra/haq.shtml>

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