

Addressing Myths and Misconceptions about Hepatitis B among African Immigrant (AI) Communities around the United States

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Food for thought

The real truth about vaccines

I got vaccinated as a kid. As a result, I'm now starting to gray and bald. My balding got so bad I had to cover my head. I have gained weight and also have wrinkles. Because of vaccines I have started aging instead of dying as a baby.



African Health Coalition

- Established in 2019 to address chronic diseases in the African Immigrant communities
- Mission
To change the African Immigrant mindset and the Faith Community culture towards health and health related issues.
- Services
Address cultural barriers / attitude to healthcare
Access to basic health care
Navigating health care system
Health education
Community screening
Networking



African Health Coalition

- Organizational partners
 - Faith based organizations
 - Social organizations
 - Businesses /Stores /Shops/Salons



Don't Let Hep B Win: Silent Killer Life Threatening

- Silent Killer
- Life Threatening
- Increase Hepatitis B awareness Education and Reduce stigma
- Provide Hepatitis B education
- Support those living with Hep B
- Screening
- Follow Up
- Referral



Health Myths & Misconceptions

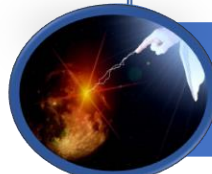
AI Definition of health



Bad health is extreme physical limitation



Primary care is a waste of time



Bad health is punishment from God



Would rather not know about diseases: Don't seek out diagnosis and resist treatments



Hep B Myths and Misconception

- Contacted through mosquito bite
- Not Common in the African Immigrant community
- Is the same as Yellow Fever
- Can be cured by prayer and supplication/fasting/traditional healer
- Can transmit through hand shaking, coughing, close contact, sharing eating utensils
- Curse from enemy
- Cannot eat protein if Hep B positive
- Cannot be pregnant if positive
- Must self isolate if positive – cannot be around people



Impact of Myths and Misconceptions

- 55 years old died of Hep B in 2019 in Nigeria. Came to the US to visit, got sick and went home for traditional treatment . Although the sister is an RN, he did not disclose that he had Hep B. He had developed liver cancer by the time his sister learned of his diagnosis.
- Chicago community member died in 2019. He knew he had the disease but kept it to himself and did not seek treatment until it was too late.
- 32-year-old died from liver cancer. She did not know she had Hep B until she developed liver cancer.

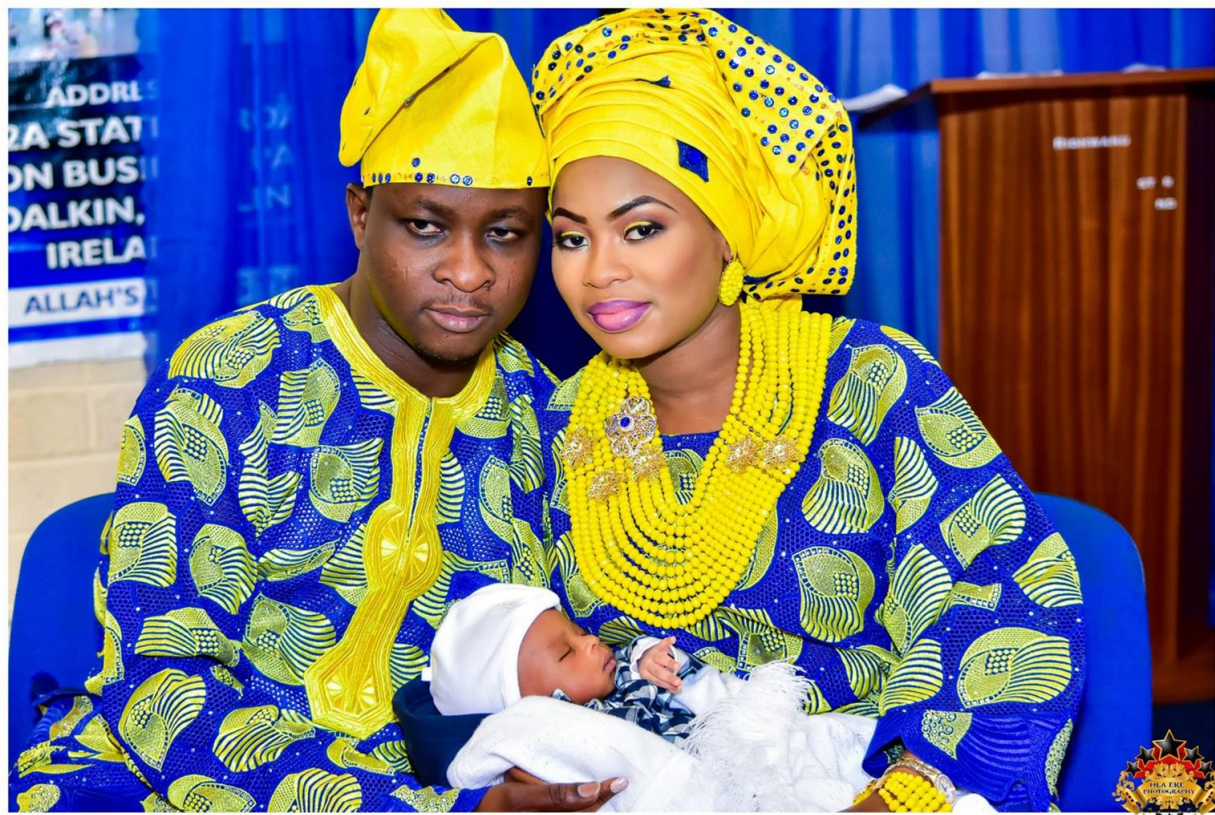


Ways AHC Addresses Myths and Misconceptions

- Be a good listener
- Building trust/relationship
- Respecting the communities' views
- Acknowledging needs
- Validating fears while providing facts
- Communication to increase awareness
- Meeting people where they are
- Flexibility
- Providing incentives
- Meeting basic needs and connecting to resources
- Nonjudgmental
- Consistency
- Follow up



Meet Ade, Ola and Lolade



Ola is Hepatitis B positive



Family History

01

Ola is a 27 y/o African Immigrant. she has an older sister and brother. She is diagnosed with Hep B.

02

Ola lost her parents when she was 15 years old. Cause of death is unknown.

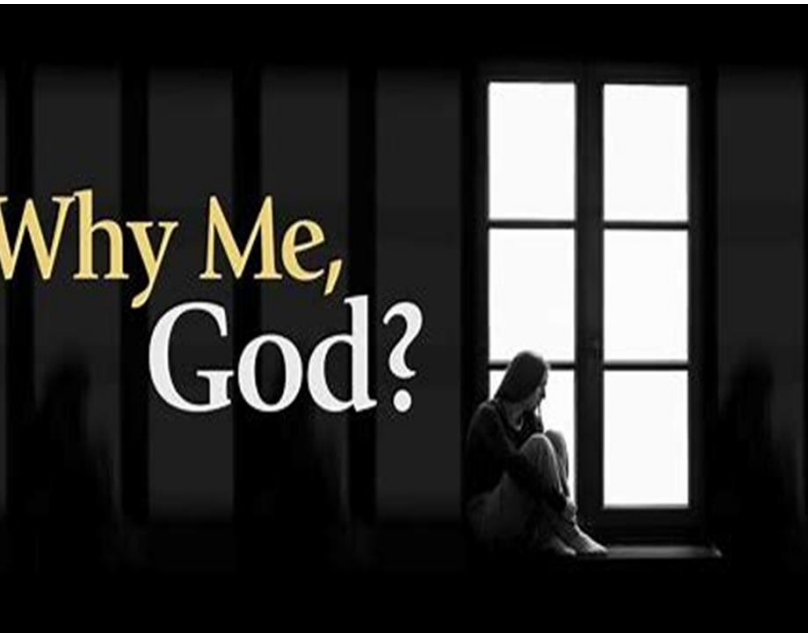
03

Ade comes from a family of two, his older sister is married with children.

04

Ade lost his dad a few years ago due to stroke. His mom is visiting to help with the new born baby.





Ola's response to Hepatitis B diagnosis.

- I cannot have Hepatitis B. I am not sick and I don't feel sick.
- I reject this in Jesus name. Hepatitis B is sent back to the sender.
- I will call home tomorrow and order some natural supplements and herbs that I can use to cure the disease.
- Let's call the man of God for prayer. I will not die but live. I shall not die insha Allah



Case Result Discussion

- Ola's older sister, brother and their families are negative.
- Ola's younger sister is Hep B positive, follow up in place.
- Ola's aunt revealed the family secret that Ola's mother died of Hep B which she caught during blood transfusion at Ola's delivery. Although she started late, Ola's mother received both medical and traditional treatments.
- Ola's father denied, he was Hep B positive till his death. He used a lot of traditional herbs, but never received medical treatment. He later died of liver cancer.
- Ade's siblings are both Hep B negative.
- Ade caught Hep B from his ex-girlfriend who was later tested and referred.



Thank You!

African Health Coalition

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