

# How to Improve the Health of Your Congregation

*It's easier than you think!*

[www.MensHealthNetwork.org](http://www.MensHealthNetwork.org)

The mission of Men's Health Network is to reach men, boys and their families where they live, work, play, and pray with information and tools for better health. We seek to empower faith groups to improve the health of those they worship with and their communities. As the center of many communities, churches can play a powerful role in improving health.<sup>1</sup>

You can take action now in simple ways. We've created a list of ideas to help get you started.

For more information on what you can do, contact us at 202-543-MHN-1 (6461) ext.101, [info@menshealthnetwork.org](mailto:info@menshealthnetwork.org)

- *Talk with your members about the role health plays in your religion.*
  - Share simple health messages from the pulpit (see the Sample Sermons section below for ideas).
    - Invite a youth to share a short message.
  - Hold an evening to discuss health issues in the context of your faith.  
Topics could include:
    - Healthy living
    - Nutrition – for you and your children and grandchildren
    - Prostate/Testicular health
    - Breast health
    - Mental health
    - Sexual health
  - Share a health message each month in your church bulletin.
  
- *Improve the fitness and wellness of your community.*
  - Organize a weekly wellness activity that is simple and appropriate for all ages and abilities.
    - Offer limited mobility exercise classes to older or disabled members in your congregation.
    - Hold a nutritious cooking class for families.
  - Hold a monthly walk around the block with your congregation.
  - Set up a quarterly competition for most weight lost, or most steps, etc. You could offer a small prize such as gift cards to Kroger, Safeway, Home Depot, etc.
  - Invite a local nurse/doctor/health educator to come speak to your congregation about men's/women's health.
    - Invite a mental health professional to come speak about common mental health issues such as depression and anxiety.

- Set up a sports team. Invite other churches in your community to form a league.
- Organize an interfaith fun run/walk to raise funds for prostate or breast cancer.
- *Help raise awareness of health issues within your congregation.*
  - Plan a health fair for your church or community. We can help you at the [MHN Healthzone](#).
  - Pass out educational brochures to your congregation (see Posters and Brochures below).
  - Raise awareness of health issues during [national health awareness periods](#).
    - Organize a [“Wear Blue Day”](#) during Men’s Health Month in June, or any day(s) during the year.
    - Hand out [pins](#)/brochures.
    - Share a message from the pulpit, or in your bulletin, related to the awareness period.

## Sample Sermons

### Christianity

- [Gospel Topics: Health](#) (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints)
- [God's Plan for Our Physical Health](#) (Baptist Church)
- [Success in Health](#) (Baptist Church)
- [Health and Holiness](#) (Catholic Church)
- [What We Believe: Health and Wholeness](#) (The United Methodist Church)
- [Health, Wellness, and Shalom](#)

### Judaism

- [What Does Jewish Tradition Say About Health and Wellness?](#) (Reform Judaism)
- [Health, Nutrition, Fitness, Extreme Sports](#)

### Islam

- [Health in Islam](#)
- [Health Guidelines from Quran and Sunnah](#)

## Posters, Brochures, and More

### Posters – Free Downloads (English and Spanish):

[Wear Blue Poster](#)

[Men's Health Month 1](#)

[Men's Health Month 2](#)

[Men's Health Month 3](#)

[Get It Checked Men](#)

[Get It Checked Women](#)

[Father's Day](#)

More posters can be found [here](#), and [here](#), and [here](#).

Flyers can be found at [www.MensHealthLibrary.com](http://www.MensHealthLibrary.com) by searching the word – flyer

### Brochures – Free Downloads (English and Spanish):

[Men's Health Facts](#)

[Prostate Cancer Awareness](#)

[Testicular Cancer Awareness](#)

[Healthy Living Game Plan](#)

[Healthy Food Makes Healthy Kids](#)

[Father's Brochure](#)

[What Women Need to Know About Men's Health](#)

More brochures can be found at [www.MensHealthLibrary.com](http://www.MensHealthLibrary.com) by searching the word – brochure

### Store:

You can purchase brochures, posters, wristbands, mugs, pens, awareness pins on cards, and more at [www.MHNStore.com](http://www.MHNStore.com)

## Helpful Websites

Men's Health Resource Center

[www.MensHealthResourceCenter.com](http://www.MensHealthResourceCenter.com)

Prostate Health and Prostate Cancer

[www.ProstateHealthGuide.com](http://www.ProstateHealthGuide.com)

[www.ProstateCancerAwarenessMonth.com](http://www.ProstateCancerAwarenessMonth.com)

Testicular Cancer

[www.TesticularCancerAwarenessMonth.com](http://www.TesticularCancerAwarenessMonth.com)

Men's Health Month, Men's Health Week, and International Men's Health Week

[www.MensHealthMonth.com](http://www.MensHealthMonth.com)

[www.MensHealthWeek.org](http://www.MensHealthWeek.org)

Blueprint for Men's Health series of e-books – free download

[www.BlueprintForMensHealth.com](http://www.BlueprintForMensHealth.com)

Wear Blue for Men and Wear Blue Day

[www.WearBlueForMensHealth.com](http://www.WearBlueForMensHealth.com)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

[www.CDC.gov](http://www.CDC.gov)

National Cancer Institute

[www.Cancer.gov](http://www.Cancer.gov)

American Cancer Society

[www.Cancer.org](http://www.Cancer.org)

## **Advisory Board**

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<sup>i</sup> DeHaven, M. J., Hunter, I. B., Wilder, L., Walton, J. W., & Berry, J. (2004). Health programs in faith-based organizations: are they effective?. *American journal of public health*, 94(6), 1030-6.