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# Artists' Housing: Connecting Art and Real Estate



By Bruce Checefsky

The City of Cleveland, Urban Land Institute Cleveland (ULI), and Assembly for the Arts recently hosted the *Art in Place Program: Connecting*

*Art + Real Estate*, at the Dunham Tavern Museum & Gardens. Dozens of residents, cultural dignitaries, philanthropy administrators, artists, real estate developers, and city officials were

there to discuss artists and real estate in the Hough neighborhood. Instead, the conversation focused on real estate development along the Euclid Ave corridor, from Cedar Ave to Chester Ave, E. 30

Street to University Circle, and excluded the central tract of land in the Hough neighborhood. There was almost no discussion on the area north of Chester Ave or within AsiaTown.

Adam Saurwein, Partner at Benesch Law and ULI Cleveland Outreach Committee Co-Chair, showed several examples of real estate development and artist collaboration projects. He cited HingeTown, including Church + State, and the Collinwood and Hough neighborhoods, where murals decorate public spaces. Art in Place grants bring artists together with real estate developers to “amplify community voices

in creative placemaking”, according to Saurwein.

The Urban Land Institute, originally incorporated under the name of the National Real Estate Foundation, is described as a global non-profit research and education organization to help its members and their partners build equitable, sustainable, healthy, and resilient communities. ULI Cleveland is one of eight cities in the world to receive Art in Place, which will be collected and used as a case study for future programs. Community listening sessions will culminate in a technical assistant panel scheduled for October.

“I used to live in the Tremont neighborhood twenty years ago, and when I moved in, it was full of artists and galleries,” said Saurwein. “Restaurants and real estate developers moved in and, unfortunately, artists and galleries have moved out, a victim of real estate success. We want to use this grant to understand lessons to learn.”

Lauren Murray, Executive Director for Dunham Tavern Museum & Gardens, was introduced and followed by Joyce Pan Huang, Director of City Planning for the City of Cleveland, who said art making and real estate development have parallels. Rhonda Brown, the City of Cleveland senior strategist for arts, culture, and the creative economy, read from a prepared statement thanking the city for the opportunity to return home. “In many ways, real estate developers, at the

# Gurnese Smedley Turns 100 Years Old



By Bruce Checefsky

Ms. Gurnese Smedley was born to Ed and Hattie Delonely on Aug. 16, 1923, in Sheffield, Alabama. She is a God-fearing woman who accepted Christ at an early age. Gurnese is involved in New Bethel Baptist Church and was Sunday School Secretary for three years. She met and married

James Johnson and had a beautiful daughter named Mary Gurnese Patterson, who preceded her in death. She eventually relocated to Cleveland and met and married her second husband, Mr. Jimmy Smedley. She has enjoyed traveling, cooking, and crocheting.

After her husband's passing, Gurnese has been a resident at Kingsbury Tower in Ward 7 since 2012. She is an outspoken person and is loved by many. Over the past 100 years, Gurnese has shared her wisdom and experience with those around her. Her many contributions to her community and family are commendable and inspirational to others.



Gurnese Smedley at 100! Proclamation by Ward 7 Councilmember Stephanie Howse

Continued on page 6

# The Sound of Blackness

by Melvin Twigg Mason

What is it about jazz trumpeter Donald Byrd's "Cristo Redentor" that so captivates me?

The iconic 1970 tune, written by Duke Pearson ("Chili Peppers," "Jeannine"), seems to capture the soul of how it feels to be Black in America. Though Pearson attributed this work to

*"What...Byrd ultimately renders is a heart-wrenching, soul-stirring instrumental declaration of angst and longing."*

his being inspired by the Brazilian statue of the same name, what his friend Byrd ultimately renders is a heart-wrenching, soul-stirring instrumental declaration of angst and longing. I reason this to be true because of the ways the song has largely been used. It is the music bed for such media as civil rights documentaries, season 1 of Luke Cage (Marvel's Black antihero), and even Spike Lee's "Malcolm X" movie. It is the backdrop and the soundtrack to this country's

racial divide.

When I hear the opening hum of the singers, I see in my mind's eye the back-breaking work of the Negro cotton pickers and people of color (POC) builders of America. As I listen to the plinking of the piano, I hear the clink-clank of their hammers and pick axes,



and the cutting sweeps of their harvesting sickles. The wails of the female vocalists remind me of the moans of a people desperate to be free.

The song goes on, and Byrd's trumpet begins to tell the story of our struggle to be fairly

treated, while my mind envisions scenes of dogs biting and hoses spraying, of dark backs with torn shirts and tight pants racing through thick, muddy bogs in the dead of night, praying not to be seen or heard.

Then the brief refrain of hope is finally heard, and I think of

the comfort of Mama's cooking, or her tucking me safely into my bed at night, which provides a short respite from the ongoing struggle, until the next day's wickedness quickly dawns.

The whole song, though sad and unrelenting, arguably serves

to galvanize a beleaguered people. All POC feel the same struggle, though perhaps experienced in slightly different ways. To me, this is our song of truth-telling, of demon-facing—and much like the killing of George Floyd bonded people all over the world, every time I hear Cristo Redentor I feel bonded to my Black brothers and sisters in a call to action. What action I don't exactly know, but every time I hear it I feel like I need to DO something. But like the song when it ebbs, I too recede into "the chains" of living with racism and await the next sound of hope.

I've noticed that the song has no abrupt ending—it just fades off into the audible distance, retracing its themes of pain and struggle and brief reprieve. I pray that Duke Pearson's tribute to a Savior's statue will not end up being the ongoing sound of being Black in America.




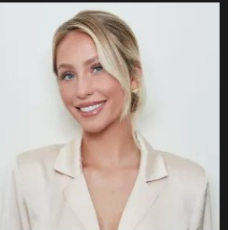














# Cleveland Host Forbes' Under 30 Summit

By Staff Writer

Join the world's top young leaders, founders, and creators for a life-changing four days of connecting, learning, teaching, and building. The 2023 Forbes Under 30 Summit is more of an immersive experience than a static conference: a private concert, A-list speakers, exclusive networking opportunities, industry-focused excursions, local culinary experiences, a legendary bar crawl, a powerful day of community service, and more.

This October 8th, 9th 10th, and 11th, the brightest entrepreneurs and game-changers in their industries are gathering in the city that produced the world's first billionaire: Cleveland. Will you be there?

In addition to the Summit, Forbes has partnered with Destination Cleveland to connect you with experiences that highlight Cleveland's diversity, creativity and contagious passion. We are working with a team of local curators, innovators and artists to showcase everything that makes Cleveland such a special place, and have intentionally left the agenda pretty open so you can

 <b>Machine Gun Kelly</b> Artist & Entrepreneur	 <b>Renee Montgomery</b> 2x WNBA Champion and Co-Owner & VP — Atlanta Dream	 <b>Raiin Wilson</b> Actor, Author, Writer & Producer	 <b>Alix Earle</b> Content Creator
 <b>Matt Rife</b> Comedian & Actor	 <b>Pinky Cole</b> Founder & CEO — Slutty Vegan	 <b>Paige Mycoskie</b> Founder & President — Aviator Nation	 <b>Ham Serunjogi</b> Cofounder & CEO — Chipper Cash
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 <b>Wemimo Abbey</b> Cofounder & Co-CEO — Esusu Financial, Inc.	 <b>Nancy Whiteman</b> CEO, Wana Brands and Founder — Wana Brands Foundation	 <b>Arturo Elizondo</b> Cofounder & CEO — The EVERY Company	 <b>Vince Ning</b> Cofounder & Co-CEO — Nabis
 <b>Kristin Stoller</b> Senior Editor, Under 30 — Forbes	 <b>Randall Lane</b> Chief Content Officer and Under 30 Founder — Forbes		

explore on Tuesday, October 10 before programming begins. Each experience requires a separate registration outside of your Summit ticket and availability is first-come, first-served. You must be registered for the 2023 Forbes Under 30 Summit to partake in the add-on experiences below. Should you have any questions, please contact 30under30@forbes.com accordingly.

\*You must be 21+ years old to attend the in-person portion of this event.

<https://www.forbes.com/connect/event/2023under30summit/>

# PUBLIC TOWN HALL MEETING

As a member of the community, you have an important and vital role in the education of children throughout Cleveland. Dr. Morgan invites you to a public town hall meeting to share your thoughts and suggestions on ways CMSD can continue to improve the Cleveland schools and deliver rewarding instructional experiences to all students.

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[ClevelandMetroSchools.org/ListenAndLearn](https://ClevelandMetroSchools.org/ListenAndLearn)



# Book of Ruth: Life's Changing Situations

By Pastor Larry Frazier

In the Old Testament, Ruth lived a life of trials, tragedy, testing, and eventually triumph. Though she lived centuries before current-day gospel singer, Larnelle Harris, the words from one of his songs aptly apply to her situation. Speaking of God, Harris sang, "You had a reason for those trials. It seemed I got stronger every mile. So you were in it after all." ("In It After All"). Ruth's story shows us that God is there for us in life's good, bad, difficult, and ordinary times.

Ruth, a Moabite, married into an Israelite family. The strict laws of that period did not look favorably on such unions. Throughout history, there had been bad blood between the two groups of people. The biblical references in 1 Samuel 14:47 and 2 Kings 23:13 bear this out. We know, however, that people have always and will continue to fall in love and marry the ones of their choosing.



Ruth lived with her husband and his family in their native country until famine and hardship came upon the land. This caused them to relocate and seek relief in Ruth's native land, Moab. Sometimes the Hand of God forces us to see things from both sides of a situation and leads us to put aside prejudices for the common good. God brings provision from wherever He wants; He owns it all.

Tragedies started to multiply for Ruth and the family. Ruth's

husband died and her mother-in-law and sister-in-law lost their husbands to death as well. The three women had to fend for themselves. Naomi, the mother-in-law, told her two Moabite daughters-in-law to return to their people and find other husbands. The other daughter-in-law departed but Ruth stayed with Naomi and returned to the land of Israel because the famine had eased. Ruth's association with Naomi's family changed her heart. The Moabites worshipped

a different god than the Israelites. According to the Word of God, the Moabites worshipped a pagan god. (2 Kings 23:13).

God makes changes in our lives that always work for our benefit. God gave Ruth a new confession. She said to Naomi, "Don't urge me to leave you or to turn back from you. Where you go, I will go and where you stay, I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God, my God." Ruth was still a Moabite, but her spiritual identity was changed. James Baldwin once said, "Not everything that is faced can be changed but nothing can be changed until it is faced."

In the land of Israel, Ruth found another husband and in the lineage that followed, Jesus Christ, THE SAVIOR, was born. God leaves nothing to chance. His control is all-knowing, all-present, and all-powerful. Ruth endured trials, hardship and change through the Holy Spirit working faith in her life. Looking at the words of C. S. Lewis, we can see what God intends for your life through faith in Jesus Christ: "You can't go back and change the beginning, but you can start where you are and change the ending."

## Mastery: Terrance Spivey



By Terri Mason

It has been said that mastery is a true “gem” that all humans have in common; a natural gift that brings equality to subconscious fruition. As a little

boy, Terrance Spivey made an innocent yet predestined decision to live with his great-grandmother while his other siblings stayed with their mom. This was a decision that would later give him a life

of artistic freedom and theatrical mastery.

Although a native of Kountze, Texas, Terrance’s dreams, visions, and goals led him to the heart of Cleveland, which became his home. Terrance graduated from Prairie View A&M University, then resided in New York as an actor and studied at William Esper Studios. Terrance appeared in “The Fruits of Miss Mourning” at the National Black Theatre, “Waiting for Lefty” at Michael Chekhov Studio, and “Stringbean” at Lincoln Center Lab. Terrance later came back to Cleveland to be Artistic Director for the historic Karamu House, the oldest Black theater in the country. At Karamu, Terrance programmed over 70 productions and garnered many awards leading to 2013, when Karamu achieved the Repertory Company of The Year award by the Audience Development Committee, Inc. (AUDELCO), an organization that acknowledges and honors Black Theatre and its artists in New York City.

Terrance directed a plethora of plays and was appointed to

direct “Objectively/Reasonable: A Community Response To The Shooting of Tamir Rice” in 2014, a play produced by Cleveland’s Playwrights Local. The cast was then invited to perform excerpts for NPR’s Going There with Michel Martin. During the pandemic, Terrance directed the film short, “Resurrection of the Last Black Man in 08:46.” This received numerous accolades at film festivals, including the 2020 Toronto Black Festival and the 2021 Black Panther Film Festival.

Currently, Terrance is the founding director of *Powerful Long Ladder*. Under this company, he has directed James Baldwin’s “The Amen Corner” and “Lady Day” at Emerson’s Bar & Grill, both in collaboration with Holy Trinity Culture Arts Center. He also directed the urban drama, “Thiz Girlz Lyfe” in collaboration with Playwrights’ Local, an organization dedicated to supporting dramatists of Northeast Ohio.

Terrance’s list is ongoing and limitless, which clarifies the mastery of his inner gem. He has expertly mastered it and is still defining it.

## Poll Location Changes and New ID Requirements

By Gregory Moore

Despite a record voter turnout across Cuyahoga County in the August 8th Special Election, thousands of voters encountered a series of problems on election day related to changes in poll locations and the new photo ID requirements. According to the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections, over 47,000 voters were impacted by changes to polling locations in 50 precincts across eight municipalities including voters in Cleveland’s Wards 7 and 9 where poll consolidations were concentrated. On August 3rd, the County Board had advised voters to confirm their voting location before going to the polls on Election Day.

According to election officials, poll locations are consolidated for a variety of reasons, including the lack of adequate poll workers and the need to reduce poll locations to accommodate what was expected to be a smaller voter turnout. More voters than expected arrived at their previously assigned poll locations and were directed by poll monitors or signage to their newly assigned location.

The August 8th statewide Special Election’s voter turnout

of 38% defied expectations and went well beyond projections and last year’s August statewide turnout of 8.01%. Ohio voters statewide voted overwhelmingly (57.01% to 42.99%) to reject ISSUE #1, a Republican-led effort to dramatically increase the percentage requirement to pass a constitutional amendment from 50% +1 to 60%.

Courtney Flynn of the Ohio Voting Rights Coalition (OVRC) reported that there were over two hundred texts or calls into the 866-OUR-VOTE Election Protection hotline on election day, with the majority of problems reported related to changes in poll locations and new ID requirements for in-person voting. On January 6, 2023, Governor Mike DeWine signed Ohio House Bill 458 into law that made several changes to election laws including new photo ID requirements that restricted the kind of identification that would be accepted to vote in-person during early voting and on election day.

To help mitigate the disparity, the state has offered a free state-issued ID to voters who request it with the proper documentation. Non-profit advocacy groups like Vote



Riders have worked to assist voters in acquiring state-issued identification to ensure their ability to vote. The Ohio Voting Rights Coalition and local voting rights advocates plan to step up their efforts to inform voters of new poll locations, as well as new voter ID requirements for the upcoming November 7th general election.

The November ballot will include two statewide constitutional amendments which will ask voters to decide if Ohio should enshrine the right to an abortion in the Ohio constitution; also, if recreational use of marijuana should be legalized across the state. With the defeat

of Issue # 1, both measures will require a 50% + 1 majority of Ohio voters to be approved.

Voters in the city of Cleveland will also be asked if they support a proposed People’s Budget Charter Amendment, which if approved would create a residents-led Steering Committee to directly decide how 2%, the equivalent of over \$14 Million of the city budget, is spent on projects in their neighborhoods. A citywide grassroots organization, Participatory Budgeting CLE (PBCLE), has spearheaded the charter amendment and submitted the necessary signatures to qualify for the city’s November 7th ballot.

# Prostate Cancer Awareness Month

By Devon Jones

The prostate gland is a male reproductive organ located below the bladder. This walnut-sized gland nourishes and transports semen throughout the male reproductive system. According to the Urology Care Foundation, there are four stages of prostate cancer: early stages (I and II), where the tumor has not spread beyond the prostate; locally advanced (III), where cancer has spread outside the prostate but only to nearby tissues; and advanced stage (IV), where cancer has spread outside the prostate to other parts such as the lymph nodes, bones, liver or lungs.

According to the Prostate Conditions Education Council, among males, prostate cancer is the most common cancer and the second leading cause of death in men. Prostate cancer is not deadly when diagnosed and treated promptly, thus screening and detection are key to preventing negative outcomes. In observance of Prostate Cancer Awareness Month (September), The Cleveland Observer (TCO) has collaborated with Heart, Body, and Soul to bring much-needed information and resources to Cleveland residents that will help

them understand prostate cancer and how it can be addressed. We asked Dr. Randy Vince, a practicing urologist at University Hospital's Cutler Center for Men, some frequently asked questions about prostate cancer and its impact on the community.

## Why is prostate cancer so prevalent in Black males?

The short answer is nobody knows a definitive cause. Historically, and even sometimes currently, people have stated that Black men have genes that predispose them to prostate cancer more than other men. However, despite billions of dollars of research, nobody has shown a gene or any related genes that account for this difference. Recently, environmental exposures, such as increased pollution and other social determinants of health, have surfaced as a potential cause, as we know these factors impact a man's risk for developing many health conditions.

## Is prostate cancer preventable? If so, what are some ways to prevent it?

There's no definitive method to prevent prostate cancer. In fact, as men, the longer we live,



the higher the risk of developing prostate cancer. However, many men who develop prostate cancer don't need treatment. A percentage of men will develop non-aggressive prostate cancer that doesn't impact their health. However, a significant number of men will have prostate cancer that's aggressive and could potentially be lethal. This is why screening is so important to find men who benefit most from treatment.

## What are the symptoms of prostate cancer? When should men go see a urologist to get checked for prostate cancer?

Like many other health conditions, it's too late when you have symptoms. Prostate cancer is no different. By the time you have symptoms from prostate cancer, the cancer is advanced and potentially incurable. This again highlights why it is so important to undergo screening. Detecting cancer early-on increases the chances of a potential cure. Guidelines for prostate cancer vary, but if you have a family member who's diagnosed with prostate cancer, you should undergo screening at least 10 years before the age of your family member's diagnosis. If not, you should start discussing PSA screening at the age of 50.

Prostate Cancer and its devastating impact on African American men can not go unnoticed. According to Zero Prostate Cancer, Black men are 1.7 times as likely to be diagnosed with prostate cancer and 2.1 times as likely to die from it than white men. As Dr. Vince stated, there is no clear reason as to why black men are predisposed to this condition. There has been some discussion of social determinants of health being one of the leading causes but this has yet to be proven. To prevent prostate cancer the best thing to do is to get screened. One of the easiest ways to get screened for prostate cancer is a PSA test, which is done by blood draw.

To provide more information TCO will be hosting a live-streamed event in collaboration

### CLEVELAND OBSERVER

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with Heart, Body, and Soul titled "Me and My Prostate: A Virtual Conversation about Prostate Health, Prostate Screening, and Surviving Prostate Cancer." This live-streamed panel will be held on September 13, 2023, 6 p.m.-7 p.m. with Dr. Randy Vince and individuals who have survived the disease.

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# Cleveland Observer Community

## Artists' Housing

From front page

beginning of their process, have to consider the same thing artists do," said Brown.

MidTown Cleveland presented their neighborhood vision with an overview of developing artists housing along Euclid Avenue. There was no mention of using existing housing and warehouse stock, which is plentiful in AsiaTown and Hough neighborhoods, or references to the dozens of artists that live and work there.

"Whether it is more murals or beautifying public crosswalks, we focus on the arts," said Sophie Mueller, Economic Development Manager at MidTown. "We want to elevate the cultural patchwork of the neighborhood and amplify local artists, giving them a platform for their work."

### Maybe Someone Should Ask Them?

As introductions concluded, the breakout sessions began. Saurwein was the moderator at one table, and with a clipboard and pen in hand he asked, "What are some of the considerations artists and developers consider when creating or planning?" J. Shorey said when his project is complete (The Foundry Project Arts and Tech Incubator, located on E. 71st and Platt Ave), artists will manage the building. He recently received \$670,000 from the state of Ohio's brownfield remediation program. Shorey purchased the building from the Cuyahoga Land Bank in 2015 and plans to rent space to art school graduates and emerging tech professionals. Sean Watterson wants to see a broader policy position that includes more grant money from the current cigarette tax. Artists currently receive only 2% of a multimillion-dollar Cuyahoga Arts and Culture

program; universal basic income for artists was also mentioned.

Kim Scott, Planner at the City of Cleveland Planning, asked about critical mass and if there were enough artists regionally to absorb the new living spaces. No one had the answer. Real estate investors are betting on artists to move to MidTown. Cleveland is among the fastest-shrinking cities in America. In 2020, the population was the lowest since 1890. It has declined by over 3% since 2020. Saurwein was optimistic but cautious. "Artists are not necessarily the type of people that will sign a ten-year lease with three five-year renewals," he said. He suggested traditional lease agreements might need to be revised.

Hough may be the next artistic hot spot, with wide streets, plenty of empty warehouse space, and proximity between downtown

and University Circle. When MoCA relocated uptown, and SPACES moved deeper into Ohio City, they left behind an opportunity to grow Midtown into a thriving artists' community.

Real estate developers did not build for artists in neighborhoods that have grown organically like Tremont, Gordon Square, and Collinwood. Artists renovated, and repaired old structures, built new ones and made them their own. Investors and developers could be disappointed. Build it, and they *might not* come.







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# Me & My Prostate

A Virtual Conversation about the importance of Prostate Health, Prostate Screening and Surviving Prostate Cancer



MODERATOR  
**CHRISTOPHER WILLIAMS**  
Executive Director, Heart, Body & Soul, Inc. / Associate Publisher, WhereItzAt Magazine



GUEST SPEAKER  
**DR. RANDY VINCE**  
Director of Minority Men's Health at the Cutler Center for Men at University Hospitals

Live Streaming



START AT  
6:00 PM



WEDNESDAY  
09/13/2023



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# Fibroids: The Silent Pandemic Pt 1

By Nicole D. Miller

Every day women are suffering in silence, battling various health challenges particular to women, all the while donning unsuspecting smiles. One specific female epidemic seeping its way into everyday discussions is the development of fibroids in the uterus.

Fibroids are normally noncancerous tumors that vary in size and number and can cause diverse symptoms ranging from heavy menstrual bleeding to constipation. According to McLeod Health, a non-profit healthcare system in South Carolina, an estimated 80% of Black women and 70% of white women will have fibroids by age 55.

Sometimes, fibroids

rise of organizations such as the Black Women's Health Imperative later gave greater specificity in the 1980s. Along with this focus came the understanding of how ethnicity affects women's health.

Though there are unknown facts about fibroids, what is known is that they can grow in the muscle wall of the uterus, under the surface of the uterine lining, or under the outside of the uterus. Although there is no certain understanding of how these tumors originate, it is suspected that fibroids are caused by estrogen dominance and possibly genetics. Many women are unaware that they even have them, but the following are some telltale signs that may suggest otherwise:

misdiagnosis or mistreatment is more likely to occur due to medical racism.

Medical racism has plagued America since its inception and, more specifically, plagued the treatment of women's health. According to the Mississippi Free Press, "Both North Carolina and Mississippi passed forced-sterilization legislation." Additionally, on two separate occasions in 1957 and 1959, the North Carolina Assembly pursued sterilization laws that largely targeted Black women. The issue of sterilizing women is not only a worthy topic for the Black community, but other marginalized groups as well. In the 1970s, a startling 70,000 Native American women were forced into sterilization by the Indian Health Service. With these types of numbers, who can BIPOC women (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) trust with their wombs?

The answer is themselves. With the right amount of research and information, each woman can make the decision that best fits her personal needs. This series of articles will offer knowledge on the



occurrence of fibroid tumors, ways to identify them, their effects, and both holistic and medical remedies. Additionally, it will dive into the natural healing benefits of diet and exercise, and highlight local small businesses that can assist in a healthier lifestyle for Cleveland residents. More to come.



Coretta Scott-King (center) marches with striking hospital workers and others in Charleston, S. Carolina in 1969.


accompany other growths in the uterus called endometrial polyps. While polyps are less likely to occur (10-40% of women have them), they also contribute to prolonged bleeding in between periods and should be a topic of discussion to inform women of these kinds of effects. Both fibroids and polyps are typically noncancerous but can become cancerous.

- Bleeding between menstrual cycles.
- Heavy bleeding during the cycle (even forming blood clots).
- Pain present during intercourse.
- A frequent need to urinate more often than normal.
- Excess weight gain in the belly.
- Irregular periods.


While the existence of uterine fibroids is not new, public conversations surrounding them are. Often viewed as taboo, women's health received more attention during the 1960s Women's Rights Movement. The

This last fact indicates that knowing potential hereditary causations is essential since these tumor developments differ between races. Furthermore, since Black women have a higher rate of having fibroids, the opportunity for





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Seasonal vaccines should be an important part of your plan for good health. The flu and COVID-19 vaccines will be available this fall. Talk with your primary care provider or pharmacist if you have questions.

**For more information on how to plan for good health go to** [areaagingsolutions.org/public-health/](http://areaagingsolutions.org/public-health/)

This project is supported by the Administration for Community Living (ACL, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)) through USAging as part of a financial assistance award to USAging totaling \$74,999,835 with 100 percent funding by ACL/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official view of, nor an endorsement, by USAging ACL/HHS, or the U.S. Government.

**For vaccines contact:**

**Cuyahoga County:**  
Phone 216-201-2000 or visit [ccbh.net](http://ccbh.net)

**Cleveland:**  
Phone 216-664-2324 or visit [clevelandhealth.org](http://clevelandhealth.org)

# Does Oral Health Affect Your Overall Health?

By Sharon Lewis

When you think about your health, you usually think in terms of who you would call if you had a problem. For instance, if your mouth hurts, you call a dentist. If the rest of your body hurts, you call a medical doctor. Based on that thinking, they are separate, and neither impacts the other. Wrong! Your oral health can significantly impact your overall health.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), roughly 47% of people 30 years of age and older have some form of periodontal disease. The early stage of this condition is called Gingivitis. Gingivitis is when the gums become swollen, red, or tender and may bleed easily. Left untreated, Gingivitis progresses to periodontitis, where the gums recede, bone can be lost, and teeth can loosen and fall out. Once periodontitis develops, bacteria and their toxic byproducts can move from the surfaces of the mouth into the bloodstream and potentially damage other organs.

## Heart Disease and Stroke

The bacteria in dental plaque can



affect your heart and lungs. One potentially fatal disease is called Bacterial Endocarditis, where the lining of the heart and heart valves enlarge.

## Respiratory Infections

The bacteria associated with Gingivitis (early-stage gum disease) that becomes prolonged can be breathed into the lungs causing respiratory illnesses such as pneumonia.

## Pregnancy Complications and Infertility

There is also research that suggests that chronic

periodontitis could make it more difficult for people to conceive. Poor dental hygiene does not make it impossible for people to conceive, but it may take longer than a person with good dental hygiene.

Pregnant women may be more prone to oral infections such as cavities and gum disease. So good oral hygiene is a must. Several studies link severe periodontal disease to preterm, low-birth-weight babies. Pregnant women with periodontal disease may be seven times more likely to have premature babies.

## Osteoporosis

There is a direct correlation between bone health and oral health. Osteoporosis is a disease that weakens bones and increases the risk of fractures, mainly of the hip, spine, and wrist. As the bones weaken and deteriorate, the jaw can also be affected, causing the teeth to no longer have a firm foundation. The oral bacteria surrounding the teeth can weaken a person's defenses against the bacteria that affect the gums and can lead to periodontal disease.

## Dementia

Researchers are interested in the link between oral health and dementia, Alzheimer's disease in

particular. According to a recent article in The New York Times (Why Oral Hygiene Is Crucial to your Overall Health by Hannah Seo, April 6, 2023), Dr. Frank Scannapieco, a professor of oral biology at the University of Buffalo School of Dentistry, is quoted as saying that "Bacteria that is found in the mouth have been identified in the brain tissue of patients with Alzheimer's, which implies a potential role for them in the disease."

## Preventive Dental Care is Important

To protect your oral health, practice good hygiene daily by:

- Brushing your teeth two times per day for two minutes each time.
- Using a soft bristle brush.
- Flossing daily.
- Using mouthwash to flush out food particles left after brushing and flossing.
- Eating a healthy diet.
- Limiting sugary foods and drinks.
- Replacing your toothbrush if the bristles are splayed or worn.
- Scheduling regular dental checkups.
- Avoid tobacco use.

Good oral hygiene is a choice that you can make daily to ensure your overall health for years to come.



## A Study of Alzheimer's Disease & Genetics in African Americans

Black people are almost twice as likely to have Alzheimer's Disease (AD) than white people. Yet, we are less likely to join or be asked to join most research studies. Dr. Jonathan Haines and his team at Case Western Reserve University are looking for the genetic factors that may play a part in this health disparity, and you can help!



This global research study is looking for the following people:

- African Americans with memory loss (like dementia) or AD. AND African Americans 60+ who do not have memory loss.
- Families with >1 living person who has memory loss or AD.
- Anyone with memory loss who is younger than 60 years old.



Joining and sharing this study will help researchers around the world in the fight against AD. You'd do a 2 hour interview on your memory, health, and family history and then a small blood draw in the comfort of your home. At the end, you'll get a gift card! For more details or to join this study, please contact anyone on our team.



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Join us for a free event!

## Community Family Cookout "Purple Out" for Alzheimer's

September 23, 2023 | 1:00 - 5:00 pm

East End Neighborhood Ubuntu Garden  
2749 Woodhill Road, Cleveland, OH 44104



Join the Alzheimer's Association for a Family Cookout. Learn about Alzheimer's and its impact on families and caregivers, and hear about the free tools and resources the Association provides.

Wear purple to show your support of Alzheimer's, which is twice as likely to affect Black Americans as White Americans.

Free food, games, line dancing and more!\*

\*Guests are encouraged to bring their own lawn chairs.

To register, please contact Frederick Knuckles at frknuckles@alz.org or 216.342.5607.



24/7 Helpline: 800.272.3900 | alz.org/cleveland  
Alzheimer's Association Cleveland Area Chapter: 216.342.5556