

Racism may cause African-American men to age faster

Being the victim of racism and internalizing racist beliefs may speed up the aging process, a new study suggests.

Research conducted on African-American men showed that those who experienced the greatest amounts of discrimination and showed the strongest negative attitudes against their own racial group had shorter telomere lengths, a sign of cellular aging.

A telomere is a sequence of nucleotides at the end of a DNA molecule, or chromosome, that protects genetic material from breaking down. Telomeres are often compared to caps at the end of shoelaces that prevent the string from fraying. As cells get older, the telomeres become shorter, leaving less of a shield for the important parts of the DNA.

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