# Results of ALIVE: A Faith-Based Pilot Intervention to Improve Diet Among African American Church Members

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## What Is the Purpose of This Study?

- The ALIVE intervention is a church-based dietary intervention to increase vegetable consumption among African American church members that was designed by a partnership between researchers, African American pastors, and church leaders in the Chicagoland area.
- The ALIVE intervention reflected local community knowledge and values because it was designed and delivered by pastors and church members using a community-based participatory research approach.
- The ALIVE study measured the feasibility of implementing and evaluating the ALIVE intervention.

## What Is the Problem?

- African Americans have a higher prevalence of cardiovascular disease than other racial groups. Improving diet in African Americans could reduce this disparity.
- Dietary interventions have been less successful with African Americans than other subgroups possibly owing to insufficient cultural tailoring and skepticism about medical research among African Americans.
- A promising cultural tailoring strategy is to conduct interventions in the trusted setting of the Black church. A number of dietary interventions have been conducted in Black churches and many have resulted in increased vegetable consumption but few have been designed and/or conducted in partnership with church community members.
- A community-based participatory approach to intervention development and implementation has the potential to increase church member engagement and intervention effectiveness.

## What Are the Findings?

- The ALIVE intervention resulted in a mean increase of one vegetable serving over 9 months as well as improvements in total diet quality and reductions in weight and blood pressure.
- ALIVE was successfully adapted to a range of church settings.

## Who Should Care Most?

- African American congregations.
- Health professionals.
- Researchers and community members interested in reducing health disparities.

## Recommendations for Action

- Health disparity researchers should use a community-based participatory research approach to develop culturally tailored interventions to improve health equity.
- Programs aimed at reducing health disparities and promoting wellness should leverage preexisting social structures and values within subgroups to promote education and motivation for health behavior change.