



Deep Dive Into

Men's Health and Health Coaching

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Executive Summary

Men's health issues are less-often discussed but quickly becoming more pronounced. Both physical, mental and behavioral health issues are rising to the surface, including higher rates of chronic diseases, lower life expectancy, and limited engagement with healthcare services due to financial barriers, stereotypes and social stigma.

The most alarming statistic? Studies show that men in the U.S. have the highest rate of preventable deaths compared to other high-income countries. This Deep Dive, released in honor of National Men's Health Month, highlights the pressing health challenges faced by men and the many ways health coaching interventions might help prevent or stave off impending health issues.

Health coaches serve as guides and motivators, working with men to set personalized health goals and develop sustainable lifestyle changes. They play a pivotal role in promoting preventive care, addressing modifiable risk factors, and encouraging healthier behaviors such as proper nutrition, regular physical activity, stress and sleep management, and mental well-being.

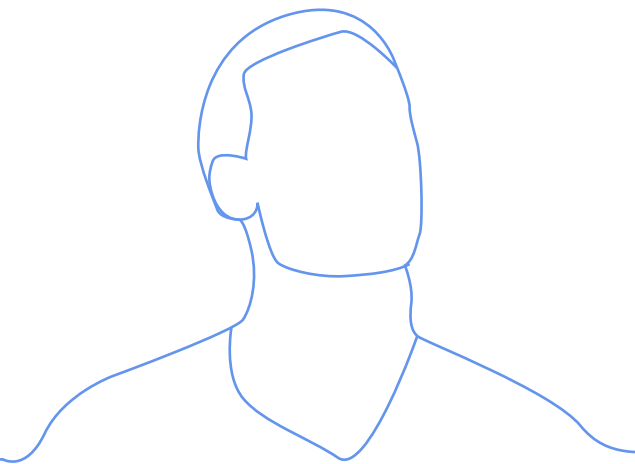
What's more, studies suggest that health coaching is more appealing to men than other forms of support (like psychotherapy), showing strong promise for health coaching interventions among this population. Through personalized coaching and accountability, health coaches can help men achieve their health goals and create sustainable habits that lead to better long-term health outcomes.

What Is Men's Health?

Men's health refers to the physical, mental, and social well-being of men, recognizing the unique biological, psychological, and sociocultural factors that influence outcomes among those who are born biologically male. It encompasses a wide range of health issues that are unique to males, such as prostate cancer and benign prostate enlargement.

Men's health focuses on maintaining optimal health and preventing diseases, especially those with a higher statistical prevalence among the male gender, which include but are not limited to heart disease, lung cancer, type 2 diabetes, and HIV.

In addition to physical health risks, mental health is also a vital factor to holistic health for men and it's often less emphasized. Mental health conditions like depression, anxiety, and stress impact men differently than their female counterparts due to unique social, environmental and biological influences. One of the quickest growing focuses within men's health—and rightfully so—is destigmatizing mental health issues and promoting access to appropriate support and treatment.



What Is Men's Health?

Transgender men (or trans men), persons who identify as men but were assigned female at birth, experience the same health issues as cisgender men and women as well as physical and mental health problems unique to or more prevalent among transgender men.

Transgender men face unique challenges and barriers in accessing quality healthcare, which includes stigmatization, discrimination, and a lack of understanding from healthcare providers. A qualitative report on the feedback provided by transgender and gender non-conforming (TGGNC) patients in emergency departments found that



of patients witnessed medical personnel gossiping, mocking, or telling jokes about TGGNC patients



had an experience with healthcare staff refusing to use their correct pronouns



had an experience with visibly uncomfortable providers and/or being asked inappropriate questions



were reported being outed by a healthcare professional

Furthermore, transgender men experience health disparities, including higher rates of mental health concerns and certain chronic conditions, which are influenced by societal factors and inadequate access to gender-affirming care. Studies showed that transgender men are 2.5 times more likely to have heart attacks and strokes than cisgender men.

Increasing healthcare provider education and training on transgender men's health to ensure competent and gender-affirming care is crucial. Studies showed that a brief LGBTQ2S+ health training program for medicine and nursing trainees provided by health coaches is more effective than usual training with online access to materials. After receiving the training with a coach, medical professionals made different decisions regarding an approach to patients (e.g. pronoun use) and their bodies (e.g. performing complete physical examinations, ordering specific medical testing).

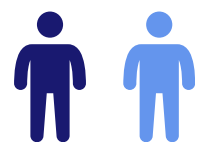
3 Facts to Know About Men's Health

Fact 1: Men are less likely to seek healthcare than women

Men are statistically less likely to seek healthcare assistance as compared to women, especially when it comes to mental health concerns. Although male and female children visit the pediatrician at the same rate, this trend changes in adulthood and medical visits among men steadily decline.

A 2022 survey of 1,000 men conducted by Cleveland Clinic found that 63% of men of color and 53% of white men don't get regular health screenings, and the majority of men don't know their complete family history as it relates to cancer and urological issues.

■ Data:



Only 1 in every 2 adult American men complete regular health screenings.

According to Cleveland Clinic survey, 72% of men said they would rather complete household chores than see their primary care doctor. Why is this the case? Research suggests part of the reason men avoid regular health screenings is due to a fear of diagnosis. In fact, about 21% of men admit to avoiding the doctor because they're too nervous to find out what might be wrong.

Societal expectations and stereotypes can also contribute to psychological barriers preventing men from seeking the healthcare they need. Research suggests that the stigma around seeking care, fueled by masculine norms conflating healthcare with appearing weak, can discourage men from regular healthcare visits.

Additionally, men have exhibited a tendency towards perceptions of invincibility and a propensity to downplay or ignore health concerns in hopes they'll resolve on their own. Lack of health awareness, compounded by anxieties about medical settings or procedures, further contribute to lower healthcare-seeking rates among men.

3 Facts to Know About Men's Health

Fact 2: Men go through hormonal changes as they age, and most experience no symptoms

While women experience more noticeable hormonal changes due to menstruation, pregnancy, and menopause, men's hormonal shifts are perceived as more subtle over time.

A man's testosterone levels decline on average about 1.6% a year after age 40. But most older men still have testosterone levels within the normal range, with only an estimated 10% to 25% having levels considered to be medically low.

This decline can contribute to various symptoms, including decreased energy, reduced muscle mass, sexual dysfunction, hot flashes, sleep and mood changes. These symptoms are often milder and more gradual compared to the hormonal changes experienced by women during menopause. And many men who have low testosterone levels experience no symptoms.

While these changes are a natural part of aging, it's essential for men to be aware of potential hormonal imbalances and consult healthcare professionals for appropriate guidance and treatment if necessary.



3 Facts to Know About Men's Health

Fact 3: Men die of COVID-19 at a higher rate than women

While overall mortality can vary across countries and populations, the data and research on COVID-19 mortality rates worldwide as well as in the U.S. specifically, has shown a higher number of deaths among males than females.

Multiple factors could contribute to this disparity and researchers are still in the process of finding answers. One possible explanation is that men may have a higher prevalence of pre-existing health conditions, such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and hypertension, which can increase the risk and severity of COVID-19 complications. According to a recent study, women may have stronger and more adaptive immune system than males.

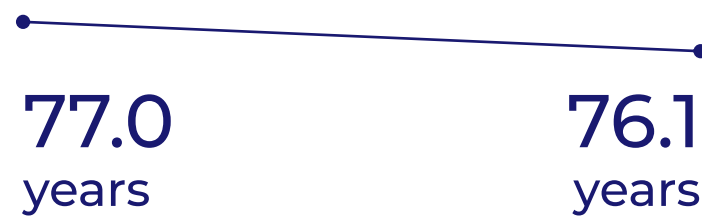
Additionally, behavioral factors like wearing masks, smoking and higher rates of risk-taking behaviors among men might play a role in mortality. For example, studies show that women are more likely than men to report hand washing, mask-wearing, and complying with social distancing restrictions, all of which may lower their risk of contracting the virus.

It's important to note, however, that it's still too early to determine why the gender gap is emerging among pandemic mortality rates, since researchers are continuing to investigate the role of sex and immune responses in COVID-19.



The State of Men's Health in the U.S.

Data:



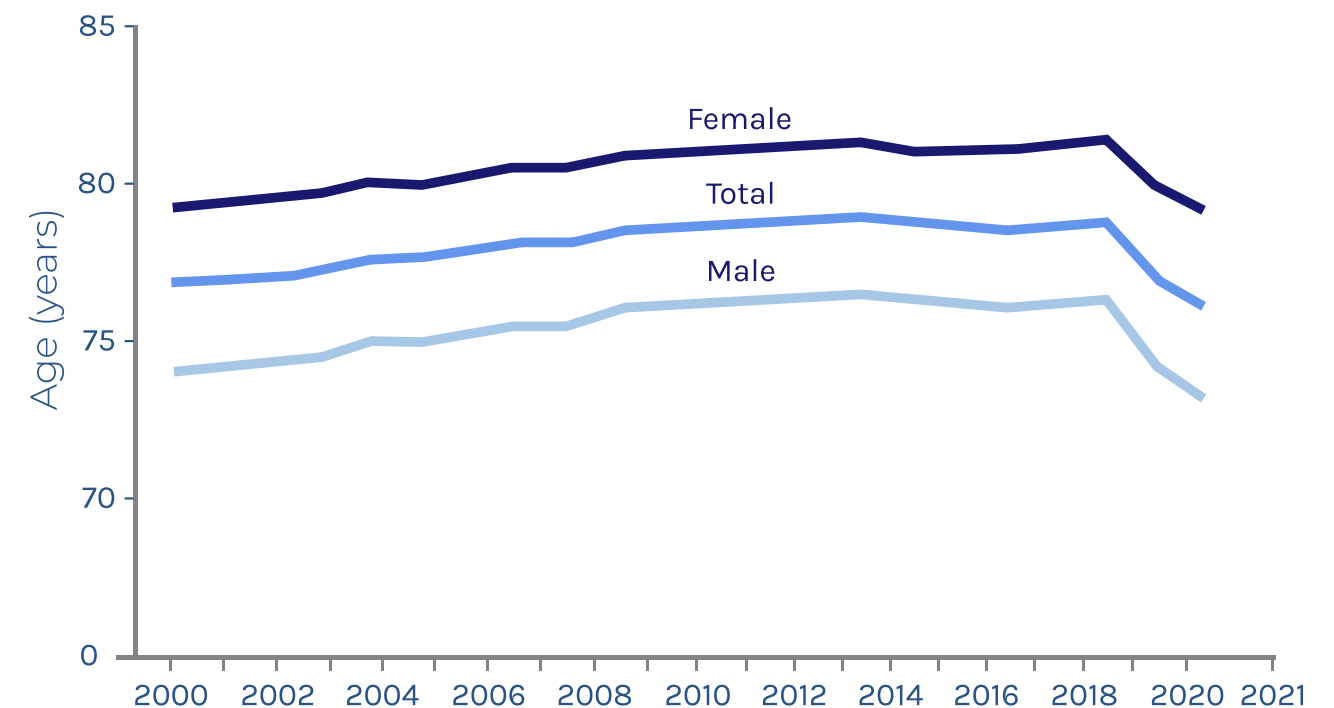
U.S. life expectancy has declined to 76.1 years in the last two decades, with an expanding gap between males and females.

According to the latest data, in 2021 life expectancy was 79.1 years for women and 73.2 years for men, making a 5.9-year difference—the largest gap in a quarter-century.

In other words, men in the U.S. are expected to live nearly six years less than women, and non-Hispanic Black and American Indian/Alaska Native men have a lower life expectancy than non-Hispanic white men.

There are multiple factors that might contribute to the shorter lifespans observed in men compared to women. Firstly, biological factors play a major role. For example, estrogen has been associated with cardiovascular health benefits, which may partially explain why men are more prone to heart disease.

Secondly, behavioral and lifestyle factors contribute significantly to the discrepancy in lifespans. Men are more likely to engage in risky behaviors such as smoking, excessive alcohol consumption, and a higher prevalence of dangerous occupations. Furthermore, men may be less likely to seek medical care for preventive check-ups and early intervention, leading to delayed diagnoses and treatment of underlying health conditions.



Note: Estimates are based on provisional data for 2021. Provisional data are subject to change as additional data are received. Estimates for 2000 - 2020 are based on final data.

Source: National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System, Mortality.

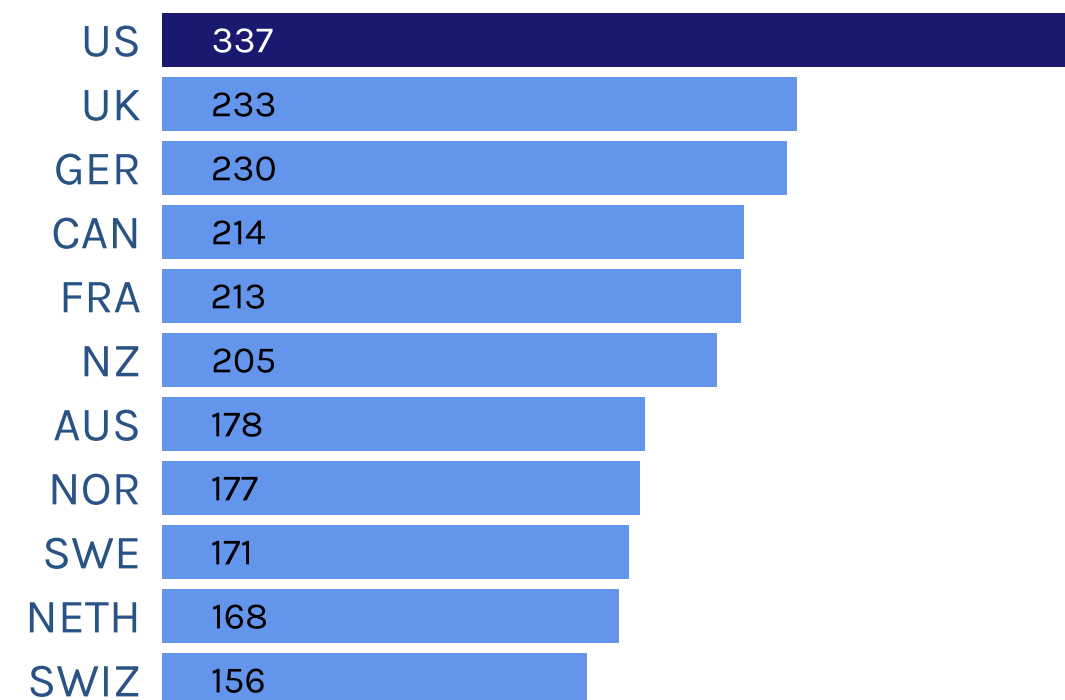
The State of Men's Health in the U.S.

Demystifying barriers to healthcare access for American men

Research from [the Commonwealth Fund](#) shows that among 11 high-income nations, men in the U.S. were more likely to die of premature deaths and have serious health conditions. At the same time, analysis shows that U.S. men have the highest rate of avoidable deaths compared to other countries.



Rates of avoidable deaths by 11 high-income countries



Note: 2016 data for FRA, NZ, NOR, and UK; 2017 data for CAN, SWIZ and US; 2018 data for AUS, NETH, and SWE; 2019 data for GER. “Avoidable deaths” are deaths which are considered preventable or treatable. The list of deaths considered avoidable is from Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, Avoidable mortality, OECD/Eurostat Lists of Preventable and Treatable Causes of Death (OECD, Apr. 2022). p. 11.

Data: Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, OECD Health Statistics 2021 (OECD, 2021).

Source: Munira Z. Gunja, Evan D. Gumas, and Reginald D. Williams II, Are Financial Barriers Affecting the Health Care Habits of American Men? A Comparison of Health Care Use, Affordability, and Other High-Income Countries (Commonwealth Fund, July 2022). <https://doi.org/10.26099/d5an-1g87>

The State of Men's Health in the U.S.

Demystifying barriers to healthcare access for American men

Lack of health insurance and poor access to health care are the most common barriers to accessing necessary care in the United States, setting it apart from other developed nations.

■ Data:

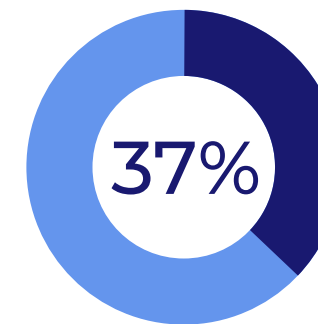
Approximately

16 million ↗

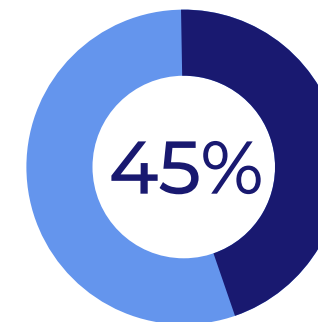
men in the U.S. currently do not have health insurance.

Researchers also found that, “In the U.S., men with lower income or frequent financial stress are less likely to get preventive care, more likely to have problems affording their care, and more likely to have physical and mental health conditions.”

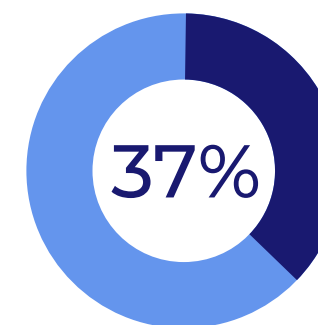
■ Data:



of U.S. men reported skipping care (medical test, treatment, or a follow-up recommended by a doctor) due to cost concerns



reported having at least one medical bill problem



reported having hypertension

Top 6 Men's Health Concerns In The U.S. Today



Heart Disease

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for men in the United States, killing 384,886 men in 2021—that's about 1 in every 4 male deaths. Clinical studies have found that cardiovascular disease develops in men a decade earlier than in women, on average, and the lack of symptoms before sudden death from heart disease is one of the biggest threats of this illness. Half of the men who die suddenly of coronary heart disease had no previous symptoms. Risk factors such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol, obesity, smoking, and a sedentary lifestyle contribute to the prevalence of cardiovascular disease.



Cancer

Cancer follows heart disease as the second-leading cause of death among American men, according to the CDC. Prostate cancer is the most common cancer among men, and it's estimated that one in eight men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer during their lifetime. Other common cancers diagnosed in men include lung and bronchus cancers, colon and rectal cancers, and skin cancers. Regular screenings and early detection are crucial for effective treatment.



Obesity and Type 2 Diabetes

Obesity rates in the U.S. have been on the rise, contributing to an increased prevalence of type 2 diabetes. More than 60% of adult American men are overweight or obese. Compared to women, men have a higher risk of getting type 2 diabetes at a lower weight. This is partly because male bodies store more belly fat, which raises the risk of this chronic disease. Poor diet, lack of physical activity, and sedentary lifestyles are key factors driving these health concerns among men.

Top 6 Men's Health Concerns In The U.S. Today



Mental Health

Although mental illnesses are statistically more prevalent in women than in men, men suffering from mental diseases are less likely to receive mental health treatment or receive a diagnosis. Every year, 6 million American men experience symptoms of depression but less than half receive help. Symptoms could also differ between men and women. Sometimes men experience depression as anger or irritability rather than sadness. Relatedly, men are 4 times more likely to die by suicide than women, according to the CDC.



Substance Abuse and Addiction

Men may be more prone to substance abuse and addiction as a coping mechanism for underlying mental health issues. Instead of seeking mental health support, some men may turn to substances like alcohol or drugs to numb their emotions or alleviate distress, which can further exacerbate mental health problems. Alcohol and drug abuse can have severe health consequences, leading to physical and mental health issues, relationship problems, and a higher risk of accidents or injuries.



HIV/AIDS

HIV continues to have a disproportionate impact on certain populations, particularly gay, bisexual, and other men who engage in sexual activity with men. 2019 data showed that 81% of new HIV infections were attributed to male-to-male sexual contact, and only 2% of all new cases were accounted to transgender people. Men living with HIV face various health challenges, including weakened immune systems, increased vulnerability to opportunistic infections and certain cancers, and higher rates of mental health issues such as depression and anxiety. Regular HIV testing, early detection, and prompt access to antiretroviral therapy (ART) and other treatment options are crucial for improving health outcomes.

How Health Coaches Can and Do Help

Health coaching can be a keystone to ensuring important behavior changes become incorporated into daily routines, which is essential when protecting and promoting men's health. Coaches leverage an evidence-based approach to help with managing disease catalyzing changes in nutrition, behavior, physical activity levels, self-acceptance, mental health improvements, enhanced quality of life, and more.

At the heart of health coaching is a holistic approach, which considers the person as a whole, rather than focusing on an individual illness or health concern.

Health coaches maintain a client-centered approach, wherein the client is the expert in choosing their goals, engaging in self-discovery or active learning processes, and self-monitoring behaviors to increase accountability, all with the support and help of a health coach, until the desired outcomes are achieved. Instead of telling clients what they should or shouldn't do, coaches help clients to discover their own power and path to change.



A Health Coach is **NOT** ...

Although health coaches **can and do work alongside patient care teams or in collaboration with other health care professionals** to help clients enact health change day-to-day, it's important to understand their scope of practice.



A health coach is NOT a Nutritionist or Dietitian

Health coaches can help clients establish action plans for generalized healthy eating behaviors, whereas nutritionists and dietitians can prescribe meal plans and give specific nutritional advice to clients according to their medical needs or goals.



A health coach is NOT a Doctor

Health coaches can not diagnose or prescribe. Health coaches are integral members of the health and care team and work with patients in helping them reach their health & wellness goals and adhere to a plan prescribed by their doctor.



A health coach is NOT a Personal Trainer

While health coaches encourage physical activity, they focus on many other aspects of a person's wellbeing including emotional and mental wellness. They do not typically create fitness regimens in the same way that personal trainers do. However, some health coaches do hold fitness certifications and can help those who are seeking both a health coach and a personal trainer.



A health coach is NOT a Therapist

Health coaches don't need to be therapists or psychologists, and great coaches don't try to mimic what a mental healthcare professional does. These professionals can complement one another and often work together.

A Health Coach **is** ...

- ✓ A highly skilled and certified professional
- ✓ Knowledgeable in human behavior, motivational techniques and health outcomes
- ✓ A change agent helping clients set and achieve health goals and build new habits
- ✓ Trained in helping a client maintain a positive and healthy mindset while working towards health and wellness goals by focusing on their strengths



How Can a Men's Health Coach Help:

Behavior Change

Health coaches help clients identify unhealthy behaviors and support them in adopting healthier lifestyle choices. This may include addressing issues such as poor diet, lack of physical activity, smoking, excessive alcohol consumption, or stress.

Personalized Goal Setting

Health coaches work closely with clients to establish realistic and individualized health goals. By tailoring goals to men's specific needs, health coaches increase the likelihood of successful behavior change and long-term adherence.

Education and Awareness

Health coaches may provide clients with resources and information they need to understand the risk factors, symptoms, and consequences of chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, hypertension, and obesity. By raising awareness, health coaches empower men to make informed decisions about their health and take proactive steps to prevent or manage these conditions.

Nutritional Guidance

Health coaches provide clients with practical guidance on nutrition and healthy eating habits, educating about balanced diets, portion control, and the importance of nutrient-dense foods. Health coaches also can help men develop personalized meal plans, navigate food choices in different settings, and address specific dietary concerns or restrictions.

How Can a Men's Health Coach Help:

Physical Activity Promotion

Regular physical activity is crucial for preventing and managing chronic disease. Health coaches help clients find enjoyable and sustainable ways to incorporate physical activity into their daily lives. They may recommend active routines, cardiovascular exercises, provide guidance, and offer strategies to overcome barriers or time constraints.

Stress Management

Chronic stress can contribute to the development and exacerbation of various chronic diseases. Health coaches can teach relaxation techniques, breathing exercises, mindfulness, and stress reduction strategies. By addressing stress, health coaches help men improve their mental well-being and reduce the risk of stress-related health issues.

Support and Accountability

Health coaches provide ongoing support and accountability to clients as they work towards their health goals. They offer encouragement, motivation, and guidance throughout the process. They can also encourage men to pursue regular check-ups and tests, to keep them on track with their health and make adjustments as needed.

Collaboration with healthcare professionals

Health and wellness coaches can collaborate with healthcare professionals, such as primary care physicians, physical therapists, doctors, or mental health professionals, to co-create comprehensive care for clients. By working together, they can develop integrated plans that address the client's specific needs and enhance the effectiveness of disease prevention or management strategies.

The Science of Health Coaching

Prostate Cancer

A 2022 study, published in the Journal of Oncology Practice, found digital health coaching as a feasible intervention for men with prostate cancer. During the 3-month program, participants worked with a health coach via a digital app and/or through telephone calls and received prostate cancer-specific content each week. After a 12-week health coaching program, the feasibility threshold was met with 72% of study participants with prostate cancer.



Decreasing BMI

A recent 2023 study, published in the International Journal of Exercise Science, aimed to examine the effect of health coaching on exercise behavior and body composition in males 45 -75 year and reported encouraging results. After one year of working with a health coach, study participants showed a 2% decrease in BMI, 3% in android fat, and 4% in gynoid fat compared to those who only received educational materials.

Another study, with a placebo-controlled experiment and regular assessments studied the impact of health coaching among a sample of 60 overweight or obese men ages 25-60. Results showed statistically significant improvements for the coaching group. After 17 weeks of study participation, adults receiving both the supplement and coaching had the greatest losses of weight and body fat compared to other groups.

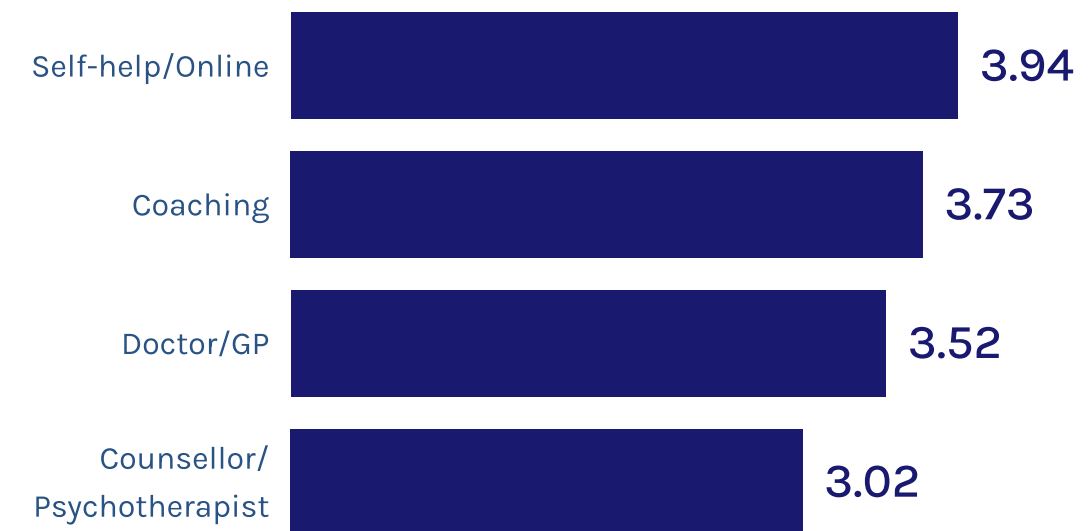
The Science of Health Coaching

Increase men's engagement in help-seeking

A 2021 study, published in *[the Coaching Psychologist Journal](#)*, found health coaching to be the most likely form of formal help-seeking among adult men, compared to counseling and psychotherapy.

In order to assess these preferences, 118 men, aged between 18-70+ years old, participated in an online survey and were asked to indicate how likely they would be to seek help at all if they were the man in the story, followed by rating the likelihood of seeking help from specified sources on a seven-point Likert scale (1=extremely unlikely to 7=extremely likely, with 4=undecided).

Likelihood of help-seeking from formal forms of help - average per form



Note: Likelihood of help-seeking rated on a seven-point Likert scale (1=extremely unlikely to 7=extremely likely, with 4=undecided).

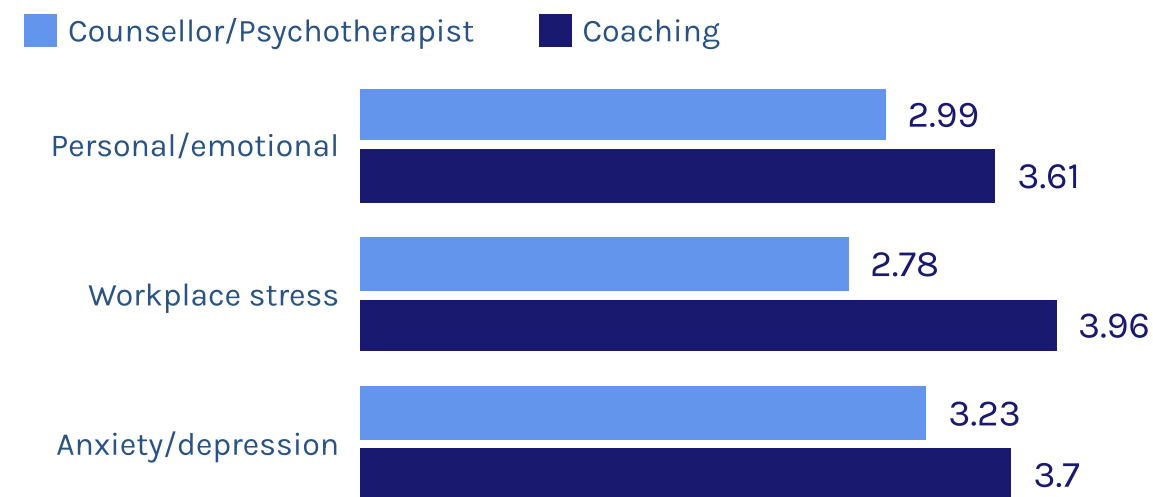
Source: A. Kennedy, A. Moorhead. Help-seeking and masculinity in opposition: A quantitative study investigating the potential of coaching to increase men's engagement in help-seeking. *The Coaching Psychologist*, Vol. 17, No. 2, 2021

When tested against counseling/psychotherapy, participants reported a significantly greater likelihood of engaging with coaching in all case studies.

The Science of Health Coaching

Increase men's engagement in help-seeking

Comparison of help-seeking through a counselor/psychotherapist and a coach, mean

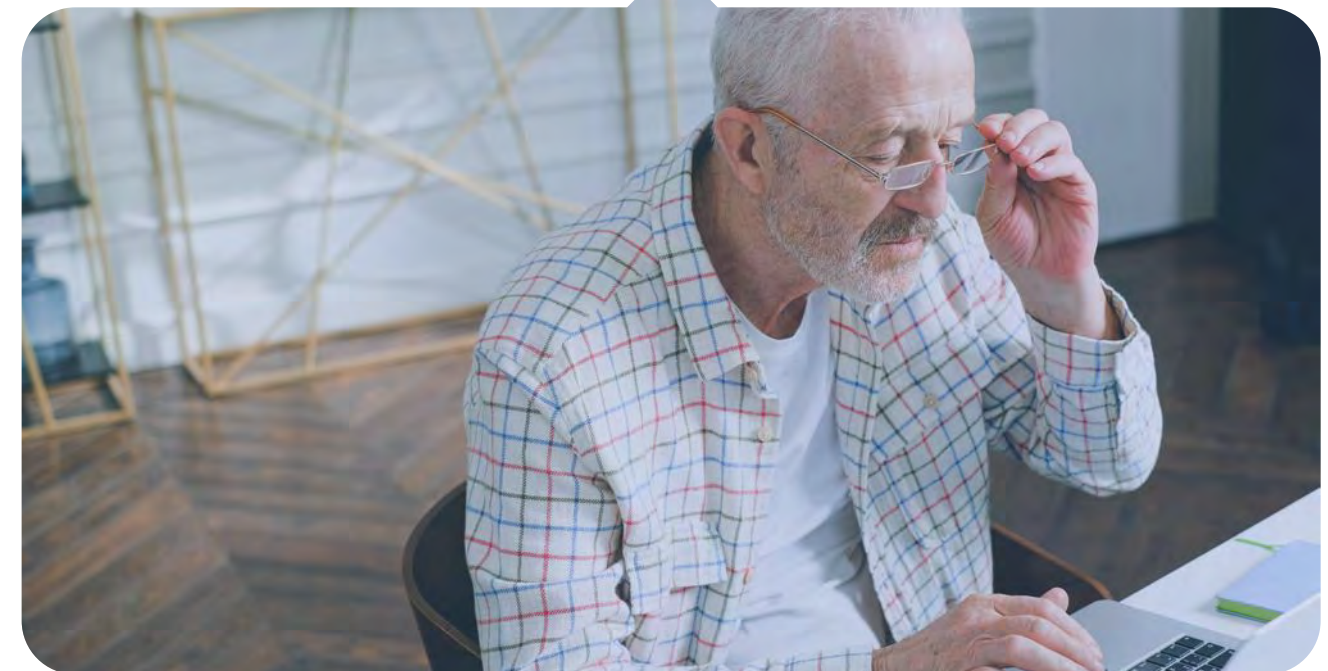


Note: Likelihood of help-seeking rated on a seven-point Likert scale (1=extremely unlikely to 7=extremely likely, with 4=undecided).

Source: A. Kennedy, A. Moorhead. Help-seeking and masculinity in opposition: A quantitative study investigating the potential of coaching to increase men's engagement in help-seeking. The Coaching Psychologist, Vol. 17, No. 2, 2021

The study concluded that

Coaching appears to have the potential to counter the negative impact of gender role strain paradigm as this cognitive and action-focused approach is more in line with male gender norms and masculine identity than a counselor/psychotherapist and doctor/GP

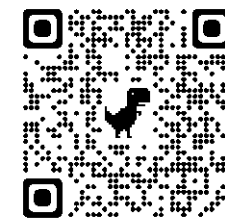


About YourCoach

[YourCoach.Health](#) is the only operating system for behavior change, powered by health coaches. Our industry partners entrust us to stand up or augment their health coaching operations utilizing our APIs, widgets and tech-augmented army of validated and credentialed health coaches to surround their existing product or service. We're the premier virtual home for health and wellness coaching, an ecosystem built to empower health coaches while expanding access to their services through our industry partnerships. Join us on the Health Coaching Revolution as we strive to deliver the power of health coaching to the 8.5 billion global population by 2030.



Health Coaching
Industry Report V2.0



Our mission

By the year 2030 our mission is for the projected 8.5 billion people in the world to have access to Health Coaches, creating even more Happy and Healthy Humans.

We are here for you!

We stand up, scale and operate best-in-class health coaching services for the health and care industry via our easily and seamlessly embedded technology, powered by the largest army of validated health and wellness coaches. If you are a health and care company looking to integrate or scale health coaching around your product or service, we are here for you!

