Spirituality, Cultural Practices, and Cardiovascular Health

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African Diaspora subjects have often united to form spiritual communities that serve as purposeful safety nets to counteract the negative effects associate with discrimination in the United States. The African Hebrew Israelites, a group of African Americans who migrated from Chicago to Israel in the late 1960s, are an example of one such spiritual group. Examining the spiritual and cultural practices of the African Hebrew Israelites, an understudied community, could provide important information about culturally appropriate strategies to promote cardiovascular health among African Americans. We seek to examine and understand their spiritual-cultural practices with an emphasis on determining how these practices influence the cardiovascular risk among group members. We will study the community’s proactive and purposeful approach to health (including their mandated veganism) as a potential strategy for improving health outcomes in other communities.