

Medical Writing Doesn't Have to Be Complicated.



New Year, New Opportunities, New Lessons



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The year 2020 has gotten off to a colorful start to say the least. Projects have kept me engaged with many lessons learned.

Lately, I have writing about sickle cell disease (SCD) for consumer and

scientific publications. In the process, I uncovered the following startling facts.

- 1) Sickle cell disease affects 100,000 people in the United States. That is **double** the number of people who have both cystic fibrosis and hemophilia **combined**. Yet, the condition has not received nearly as much federal support.
- 2) For nearly 20 years, SCD had only one treatment, hydroxyurea, a drug originally developed for cancer. In the last 3 years, three new drugs were approved--two of which the FDA approved last year 10 years apart.
- 3) SCD is not a disease that exclusively effects those of African ancestry. While SCD most commonly occurs among people of African, African American/Black, and Afro-Caribbean descent, the Latin(x) community is second largest group with the condition. People of Southern European, South Asian, and Middle Eastern heritage can also have SCD.

February is National Heart Month

February may be drawing to a close, but that doesn't mean it's too late to learn about the little pulsating powerhouse that provides the soundtrack of our lives. Here are a few important tips on heart disease--most of which come courtesy of the Cleveland Clinic.

- 1) Heart disease is the **number 1 killer in women**, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It claims more female lives than every single cancer combined.
- 2) Lighten up already! As it turns out, your mood has a lot to do with your heart health, and the happier you are, the healthier your heart. People who are typically happy, have a positive attitude, and able to control extreme emotions generally have a lower risk of heart disease than people who are sad and temperamental.
- 3) Believe it or not, broken hearts are actually *real*. Experiencing heartbreak can cause temporary heart failure.
- 4) It pays to exercise your body as well as your brain. The higher your level of education, the lower your risk for heart disease.
- 5) Aside from managing stress, exercising is the single most important thing you can do to keep your ticker in tip-top shape.

For more information about heart disease, check out [this link](#) from the Cleveland Clinic.

So... What's Next in Frieda's World?

This year, I filed my first piece for *O! The Oprah Magazine*. My article, which talks about sickle cell disease, will run in the April issue. In my latest piece as a [Doximity Op-Med Fellow](#), I took a risk by talking about some of the looming challenges facing the pharmacy world. My next Doximity piece is an essay exploring the perceptions of pharmacists and other healthcare professionals

who explore what some perceive to be "nontraditional" career paths.

On a less technical note, I just finished my first children's book, which is currently scheduled for release in May. I'll share additional details closer to the release date as things continue to materialize.

In March, I am headed to a conference and covering a workshop. I look forward to including some gems from these events in my next issue.

Until then, stay tuned...



Frieda Wiley, PharmD
Freelance Medical and Science
Writer

frieda@friedawiley.com

(832) 781-1662



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