Frequency of Albinism / Rates of Occurrence

North America, Europe, Africa and Tanzania*

While numbers vary widely and no comprehensive studies have been conducted, it is reported that in North America and Europe, an estimate of 1 in every 17,000 to 20,000 people have albinism.¹

In Africa it is estimated that 1 in every 5,000 to 15,000 people have albinism with selected populations having estimates as high as 1 in 1,000. ² In Tanzania where UTSS is based, the prevalence of albinism is estimated to be 1 in 1,400 and 1 in 19 carry the gene.³ This means that there are over 33,000 persons with albinism⁴ in Tanzania, with a rate of more than 14 times that of North America & Europe.


NOAH, a national group serving persons with albinism in the USA report the frequency to be 1 in 17,000 in USA, see [http://albinism.org/publications/what_is_albinism.html](http://albinism.org/publications/what_is_albinism.html)

More recently, groups serving persons with albinism report it to be 1 in 17,000.


³ 1 in 1,400 data is from Luande J, Henschkle CI, Mohammed N: The Tanzanian human albino skin. Cancer 1985, 55(8):1823-1828. Note however that this study advises that this is “A study of individuals with albinism who were registered in the Tanzania Tumour Centre in Dar-es-Salaam estimated a prevalence of 1 in 1,400. This estimation is difficult to extrapolate to the entire population, given the data's limitation only to those individuals enrolled in the registry.” Regarding this paper, American Geneticist Dr. Murray Brilliant says: “I don’t think it has been done in a rigorous fashion and so I would take this as an estimate. There are no other (independent) studies where the incidence has been reported. My estimates were for carrier frequency and were consistent with a 1 in 1,400 occurrence. (NOTE: Dr. Brillants DNA testing revealed that 1 in 19 Tanzanians carry the gene for albinism.). A world renowned geneticist specializing in albinism: [BRILLIANT.MURRAY@mcrf.mfldclin.edu](mailto:BRILLIANT.MURRAY@mcrf.mfldclin.edu)

² This is based on a national population of 47.78 million (World Bank data 2012).

*We presume the “albinism” that was measured in all cases include mostly oculocutaneous albinism which is the most visible form of albinism affecting all of the hair, skin and eyes.