COVID-19, Communities of Color, & Social Determinants of Health

Greg Millett, amfAR
Director of Public Policy
amfAR Study of COVID-19 Impact in Counties with Greater than Average Black Residents

- 91% of disproportionately black counties are located in the southern US
- COVID-19 cases and deaths increased with proportion of black residents in counties
- 97% of disproportionately black counties had at least one COVID-19 diagnosis compared to only 80% of all other counties
- 49% of black counties had at least one COVID-19 death compared to 28% of all other counties
- Underlying conditions did not explain these disparities
  - Health care access
  - # people in shared housing
  - Unemployment
The Social Determinants of Health

Underlying health conditions

Social determinants of health

(Poteat et al, 2020)
COVID-19 Risk is Rising in the Latinx Community Since Economy Re-Opening

The New York Times

Updates on the surges in Texas, California, Arizona and Florida.

The New York Times

*Many Latinos Couldn’t Stay Home. Now Virus Cases Are Soaring in Their Communities.*

Rates of coronavirus infection among Latinos have risen rapidly across the United States.

amfAR

Mental Health America

B4Stage4
COVID-19 diagnoses since reopening the US have disproportionally impacted Latinx communities

https://ehe.amfAR.org
COVID-19 Cases in 13% or more Black & 19% or more Latinx Counties—Urban vs Rural

Black Counties

COVID cases higher in counties with more black residents no matter metro size or level of urbanicity

Latino Counties

COVID cases higher in counties with more Latino residents in medium metro to rural areas

(Millett et al., 2020)
COVID-19 and H1N1: Same Outcomes A Decade Apart

Graph A: Age-Adjusted 2009 H1N1 Related Hospitalization Rates by Race/Ethnicity
Emerging Infections Program, 2009-2010

Annals of Internal Medicine

This Time Must Be Different: Disparities During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Kirsten Bibbins-Domingo, PhD, MD, MAS
Author, Article and Disclosure Information
https://doi.org/10.1053/j.amp.2021.02.003

After reports of racial and ethnic disparities in the U.S. pandemic, a large, nationally representative survey provided empirical evidence regarding the sources of these disparities. The authors found that increased likelihood of exposure to the virus, increased susceptibility to severe consequences of the infection, and lack of health care access were all important contributors, and they concluded with pointed, domain-specific recommendations to mitigate these disparities. The clarity of this path...
COVID-19 & Economic Losses Impact on Black Communities

African-American unemployment soars, as do COVID-19 deaths

Black unemployment rate rises in May while white unemployment rate falls

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

Black community braces for next threat: Mass evictions

A federal moratorium on evictions — which only applies to the 1 in 4 rental units that are backed by the government — expires in a matter of weeks.
40% of black-owned businesses not expected to survive coronavirus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>PERCENTAGE CHANGE</th>
<th>NUMBER OF OWNERS IN APRIL</th>
<th>DECLINE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>-41%</td>
<td>637,769</td>
<td>-441,347</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrant</td>
<td>-36%</td>
<td>2,009,597</td>
<td>-1,110,667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latinx</td>
<td>-32%</td>
<td>1,412,925</td>
<td>-657,971</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>-26%</td>
<td>657,896</td>
<td>-230,632</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>-17%</td>
<td>8,761,531</td>
<td>-1,791,884</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research

(Fairlie et al, May 2020)
Percentage of Uninsured Black Americans by State

National: 10.8%

(AMFAR EHE database, EHE.amfAR.org)
Black Workers By Area Of Employment
The percentage share (%), shown across occupational groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Share of black workers</th>
<th>Share of total workers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office and administrative support</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>11.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation and material moving</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food preparation and serving-related</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health care support</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal care and service</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
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COVID-19 Concerns Differ By Race/Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>April</th>
<th>June</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Will get COVID-19 and require hospitalization</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Might unknowingly spread COVID-19 to others** |       |      |
| Hispanic                | 75    | 79   |
| Black                   | 65    | 72   |
| White                   | 64    | 56   |

Black Americans are far more likely to know someone who has died of the coronavirus than others

Q: Do you personally know anyone who has died from the coronavirus, or not? (% saying they know someone who died)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>15</th>
<th>20</th>
<th>25</th>
<th>30</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>U.S. adults overall</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Americans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>31</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic Americans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>White Americans</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Washington Post-Ipsos Poll, June 2020)
Echoes from Our Past: Testing ‘Positive’ and Pages of Obituaries

"I Tested Positive": A Horrible Flashback for HIV Survivors

A 1983 cover of The Advocate

An oft-repeated sentence is triggering infinite pain.

BY JOHN CASEY
MARCH 23 2020 4:21 PM EDT

That sentence, "I tested positive" inaugurated sorrowfully more than 30 years ago was a death sentence. Literally a death
Sinophophia, Coronavirus and Discrimination

USA TODAY

Coronavirus on college campuses: Fight fear and racism along with the outbreak

The Washington Post

Democracy Dies in Darkness

Trump has no qualms about calling coronavirus the ‘Chinese Virus.’ That’s a dangerous attitude, experts say.

When Xenophobobia Spreads Like A Virus
“And this will change us. It must. All plagues change society and culture, reversing some trends while accelerating others...

The one thing we know about epidemics is that at some point they will end. The one thing we don’t know is who we will be then.”
Thank you!

Greg Millett

Greg.Millett@amfAR.org
Balancing the Physical, Mental, and Educational Health Needs of BIPOC Communities during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Sheldon D. Fields, PhD, RN, FNP-BC, AACRN, FAANP, FNAP, FAAN
First Vice President – National Black Nurses Association
COVID-19 Pandemic

**Definition:** a mild to severe respiratory illness that is caused by a coronavirus (Severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 of the genus Betacoronavirus), is transmitted chiefly by contact with infectious material (such as respiratory droplets) or with objects or surfaces contaminated by the causative virus, and is characterized especially by fever, cough, and shortness of breath and may progress to pneumonia and respiratory failure

- **CO** = Corona
- **VI** = Virus
- **D** = Disease
- **19** = 2019 the year the virus was identified

**Scientific Facts:**
- There is currently no FDA approved vaccine to protect against COVID-19
- There is no specific antiviral treatment recommended for COVID-19 (*Remdesivir is being used*)
- Supportive care to relieve symptoms is the standard of care
- The best way to protect yourself is to avoid being exposed to the virus that causes COVID-19
- The wearing of mask / face coverings decrease exposure
- A person can be asymptomatic and still be infected with COVID-19 and spread it
- It is still not clear if a person can be re-infected with COVID-19
The History of the COVID-19 Pandemic

- 12/31: Pneumonia cases in Wuhan China
- 1/20: 1st U.S. case confirmed
- 1/30: WHO declared Global Health emergency
- 2/11: WHO names COVID-19
- 2/23: Italian surge & European spike
- 2/29: 1st Report death in the U.S.
- 3/13: U.S. declared state of emergency (51 DEAD)
- 3/15: CDC bands gatherings of >50 people (72 DEAD)
- 3/26: U.S. leads world in the # of COVID cases (80K)
- 3/27: 2.2 Trillion-dollar CARES act signed
- 4/2: 10 million unemployed in the U.S. (6,654 DEAD)
- 4/24: GA, TN, SC begin to reopen (50,720 DEAD)
- 4/26: 200,000 dead worldwide
- 5/21: 5 million COVID-19 cases globally (93,606 DEAD)
- 5/25: U.S. death toll nears 100,000
- 6/10: Cases = 1,987,936 (112,198 DEAD)
- 7/12: FL post record high # of cases in one day = 15,299
- 7/13: No Deaths reported in NYC
- 7/21: CDC estimates that U.S. cases maybe 10X higher

COVID-19 Cases as of July 21, 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cases overview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>United States</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Confirmed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recovered</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deaths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Worldwide</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recovered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaths</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Black, Indigenous, People of Color

- **Black** can refer to dark-skinned peoples of Africa, Oceania, and Australia or their descendants without regard for the lightness or darkness of skin tone, and who were enslaved by white people.
- **Indigenous** refers to ethnic groups native to the Americas, and who were killed in mass by white people.
- **People of color** is an umbrella term for non-white people.
- **BIPOC** is significant in recognizing that Black and Indigenous people are severely impacted by systemic racial injustices.
Black is, Black Ain’t

*Blackness* is simultaneously a category, a group, a culture, a community, and an identity that varies between individuals. Blackness involved an awareness of one’s history, a shared experience, and a comfort in one’s current skin with an idealized hope for the future.

Get Your Knee Off of Our Necks

BLACK LIVES MATTER

AMERICAN SLAVERY
246 Years

SEGREGATION
89 years

MASS INCARCERATION
61+ Years

1619 1700 1800 1865 1954 2000
Historical Trauma

Trauma upon trauma that occurs in history to a specific group of people causing emotional and mental wounding both during their lives and to the generations that follow

- **Jews**: Holocaust
- **Japanese**: Interment
- **American Indian**: Genocide, relocation
- **Blacks**: Slavery, Segregation, Jim crow

**Individual Level impact**
- Symptoms of PTSD, survivor guilt, anxiety, anger, grief, depressive symptomology
- Impaired communication
- Substance Abuse
- Exaggerated personal attachments or independence
- Impaired Self-esteem
- Catastrophic Expectancy – preoccupation with death

**Family Level impact**
- Impaired family communication
- Stress around parenting

**Community Level impact**
- Breakdown of traditional culture, customs, languages, practices & values
- Loss of traditional rites of passage
- High rates of alcoholism
- High rates of physical illness
- Internalized racism
Racism is Stress(ful)

When you feel threatened, your nervous system **responds** by releasing a flood of **stress** hormones, including adrenaline and cortisol, which rouse the **body** for emergency action.

Your heart pounds faster, muscles tighten, blood pressure rises, breath quickens, and your senses become sharper.

**Stress** response doesn't stop firing, and these **stress** levels stay elevated far longer than is necessary for survival, it can take a toll on your health.
The Effects of Stress on the Body

**The Effects of Stress on Your Body**

- insomnia
- headaches
- depression
- increased risk of stroke
- fatigue
- autoimmune disease
- alzheimers
- obesity
- premature aging
- increased risk of cancer
- breathing problems
- asthma
- circulation problems
- increased risk of heart attack
- hormone imbalances
- acid reflux
- high blood sugar
- high blood pressure
- stomachache
- unhappiness
- weakened immune system
- erectile dysfunction
- menstrual irregularities
- fertility problems

**HOW STRESS & ANXIETY AFFECTS YOUR BODY**

**BRAIN**
- Difficulty concentrating, anxiety, depression, irritability, mood, mind fog

**CARDIOVASCULAR**
- Higher cholesterol, high blood pressure, increased risk of heart attack and stroke

**SKIN**
- Hair loss, cellulitis, hair, brittle nails, dry skin, acne, delayed tissue repair

**JOINTS AND MUSCLES**
- Increased inflammation, tension, aches and pain, muscle tightness

**GUT**
- Nutrient absorption, diarrhea, constipation, indigestion, bloating, nausea and discomfort

**REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM**
- Decreased hormone production, lack of libido, increased PMS symptoms

**IMMUNE SYSTEM**
- Decreased immune function, lowered immune defenses, increased risk of becoming ill, increase in recovery time
The Psychological Effects of Stress

African Americans experience more severe forms of mental health conditions due to unmet needs and other barriers

- In 2017, suicide was the second leading cause of death for African Americans, ages 15 to 24
- The death rate from suicide for African American men is four times greater than for African American women
- Adult African Americans are 20% more likely to report serious psychological distress than adult Whites
- African American youth who are exposed to violence are at a greater risk for PTSD by over 25%

Depression or Sadness
Anxiety or Fear
Moodiness
Restlessness
Nightmares / Insomnia
Emotional fatigue (I am Tired)
Lack of motivation or focus
Irritability or anger
Suspiciousness
Forgetfulness
Boredom
Physical Symptoms of COVID-19

Symptoms usually appear one to 14 days after exposure. Watch out for:

- Cough
- High fever
- Shortness of breath
- Loss of smell or taste
- Sore throat
When to Seek Emergency Care

- Extreme trouble breathing
- Pain or pressure in the chest that doesn’t go away
- Bluish lips or grayish face
Health Care Disparities

The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health disparities as:

Differences in health outcomes that are closely linked with social, economic, and environmental disadvantage—- are often driven by the social conditions in which individuals live, learn, work, and play

- When white folks catch a cold, Black folks get pneumonia
COVID-19 Racial Disparities

- Non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaska Native persons have a rate approximately **5 times** that of non-Hispanic white persons,
- non-Hispanic black persons have a rate approximately **5 times** that of non-Hispanic white persons,
- Hispanic or Latino persons have a rate approximately **4 times** that of non-Hispanic white persons.
COVID-19 Revealed Health Disparities

- The rate of Black fatalities is 2.4 times that of whites with COVID-19. In states including Michigan, Kansas and Wisconsin and in Washington, D.C., that ratio jumps to five to seven Black people dying of COVID-19 complications for every one white death.

- **Blacks** are only 13% of the population but account for 30% of COVID-19 cases across 14 states where data is available = **SYNDEMIC CONDITIONS**

- **Why the differences in infection and death rates from COVID-19**
  - Over-representation of Blacks in the “essential workforce” (HHA, Janitors, Food service, Laundry)
  - Population density (Public Housing, Transportation)
  - Historic trauma, mistrust, medical bias, structural racism, cultural incompetence
  - Lower health insurance rates, lack of Medicaid expansion (Especially in the Southern U.S)
  - **SDH**: Income inequality, employment discrimination, political gerrymandering
  - Higher prevalence of underlying chronic conditions (DM, HTN, Obesity, etc.)
African Americans are more likely to die at early ages from all causes.
IOM: Unequal Treatment: Confronting Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health Care

- Minorities receive a lower quality of care than whites
  - Even when they have the same health insurance or the ability to pay

- Causes of Healthcare Disparities
  - Healthcare system organization and operation
    - Cost containment, Public health insurance, Access
  - Patients’ attitudes and behaviors
    - Historical mistrust, not following doctors' orders
  - Healthcare providers biases, prejudices, and uncertainty when treating minorities
    - Ism’s and Stereotypes, communication
# Social Determinants of Health

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic Stability</th>
<th>Neighborhood and Physical Environment</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Community and Social Context</th>
<th>Health Care System</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>Housing</td>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td>Hunger</td>
<td>Social integration</td>
<td>Health coverage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Access to healthy options</td>
<td>Support systems</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expenses</td>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Early childhood education</td>
<td>Community engagement</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Debt</td>
<td>Parks</td>
<td>Vocational training</td>
<td>Discrimination</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical bills</td>
<td>Playgrounds</td>
<td>Higher education</td>
<td>Stress</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>Walkability</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zip code / geography</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Health Outcomes**
Mortality, Morbidity, Life Expectancy, Health Care Expenditures, Health Status, Functional Limitations
Health Equity – Dr. Camara Jones

- **Health Equity**: Assurance of the conditions for optimal health for all people

- **Three principles to achieve health equity**:
  - Providing resources according to need
  - Valuing all individuals and populations equally
  - Recognizing and rectifying historical injustices
Educating BIPOC Communities on COVID-19

- The scientific facts of what BIPOC Communities need to know are the same
- Know your audience and their specific cultural beliefs and needs
- Use BIPOC people to teach BIPOC people
- Language matters and everyone does not speak English
- Education should always be age appropriate
- Repeat educational sessions may be needed, especially for updates and changes
- People learn differently so be flexible
Facts: How does COVID-19 Spread

How does the coronavirus spread?

- A person can be infected and contagious even if they don’t show symptoms.
- An infected person can spread it when they cough or sneeze.
- You can also get it by touching an object with the virus on it, then touching your face.
Who is at risk in BIPOC Communities

Who’s most at risk?

- People with medical conditions like asthma, high blood pressure, diabetes and heart disease, which weaken the immune system
- Anyone age 60 or older
- Those who need to leave their homes to go to work
- Large or extended families who live together
- People in highly populated areas
Staying Safe and Decreasing your Risk

Stay at home when possible.
Wash your hands often for at least 20 seconds.
Stay six feet apart.
Don’t touch your face.
If you go out: Consider doing these things

What if I need to go out?

• Wear a cloth mask whenever possible to stop the spread.
• Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds and change your clothes as soon as you come home.
• If using public transportation, stay six feet from other passengers and avoid touching surfaces.
• Limit errands to one or two people in your house.
COVID-19 Testing

- It's your right to get tested
  - Symptomatic
  - Positive exposure
- If you are an essential worker get tested
- Testing sites will not report your background or immigration status
- More sites need to be located in high prevalence BIPOC communities
  - Churches, Community Centers
  - BIPOC healthcare workers and contact tracers
Combating COVID-19: Balancing

- Exercising
- Eating healthy meals
- Getting enough sleep
- Releasing stress
The Challenge of Intersectionality

- **Intersectionality**: the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

- Black people are not monolithic and belong to many different communities:
  - **LGBTQIAAP** – Black Transgender women killings
  - **Poor** – Living below poverty line
  - **Differently abled** (Blind, Deaf, etc..)
  - **Ethnicity**: A. A, African, Afro-Latino, Afro-Caribbean, Mixed, Bi-racial
  - **Religious grouping** – Jewish, Muslim, Christian, etc.
Increase Your Cultural Competence

The **PROCESS** of Cultural Competence

- **Cultural Awareness**
  - Self-examination of one’s own biases towards other cultures
- **Cultural Knowledge**
  - Seek and obtain a sound educational base about culturally diverse groups
- **Cultural Skill**
  - Ability to conduct a cultural assessment / Physical assessment as well
- **Cultural Encounters**
  - Process of engaging in face-to-face cultural interactions
- **Cultural Desire**
  - The motivation and want to become more culturally knowledgeable and skillful

In Search of Cultural Competence

- Nobody will never know it all
- This is a process not a final destination
- What can be learned can be unlearned, refined, updated, better informed
- You must know what motivates you and why you think it is or is not important to become more culturally competent
- Exposure and encounters can make all of the difference, but it takes more than one
- You can become more skillful and it will take some practice and you will make mistakes
- As long as you live and practice you will be in some part of this process
We Will Get Through This

“To be a Negro in this country and to be relatively conscious is to be in a rage almost all the time” — James Baldwin

“I believe in human beings, and that all human beings should be respected as such, regardless of their color” -- Malcolm X

“In the End, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends” --- Martin Luther King, Jr.
References

Institutional Racism via Michael Jackson

When you have a moment here is a video that you can take a look at and share with your colleagues, family, & friends

• It is a very simple but powerful explanation of institutional racism
• Recommendation: Use as an introduction for any trainings on institutional racism
• Great ice breaker and conversation starter

Link: https://www.trtworld.com/video/social-videos/institutional-racism-in-us-explained-through-a-michael-jackson-song/5ace29d41b01722a81cbf1e7
Speaker Contact Information

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