



National Center for
Health Statistics

Monitoring
the Nation's
Health

NCHS Data on Racial and Ethnic Disparities

About NCHS

The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) is the nation's principal health statistics agency, providing data to identify and address health issues. NCHS compiles statistical information to help guide public health and health policy decisions.

Collaborating with other public and private health partners, NCHS employs a variety of data collection mechanisms to obtain accurate information from multiple sources. This process provides a broad perspective to help us understand the population's health, influences on health, and health outcomes.

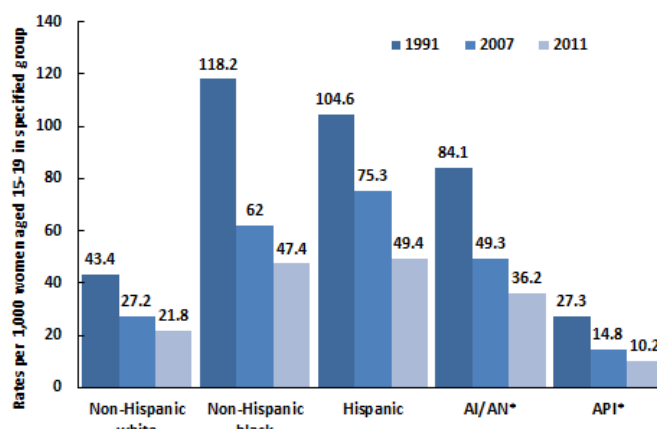
Data on Racial and Ethnic Disparities

Improving the health of racial and ethnic minorities in the United States continues to be a public health priority. Despite decades of effort, disparities persist, and changes in the racial and ethnic composition of the population have important consequences for the Nation's health. NCHS has long been a resource for data that document racial and ethnic disparities in health status, health insurance coverage, access to care, and other aspects of health. Virtually every major report and initiative on racial and ethnic health disparities draws heavily from NCHS' data collection systems.

Examples of NCHS Data

The **teenage birth rate** is an important indicator of population change and helps to describe patterns of early family formation. Final 2012 data show the teenage birth rate for women aged 15-19 years was down 6 percent from 2011 at 29.4 births per 1,000, another historic low for the nation. This rate has fallen by over one-half since 1991. Despite the recent declines, there are large disparities in teenage birth rates. In 2012, teenage birth rates were highest for non-Hispanic black teens (43.9 per 1,000) and Hispanic teens (46.3), followed by American Indian/Alaska Natives (34.9), non-Hispanic whites (20.5) and Asian/Pacific Islanders (9.7).

Birth rates for teenagers aged 15-19 years, by race and Hispanic origin: United States, selected years 1991, 2007, and 2011

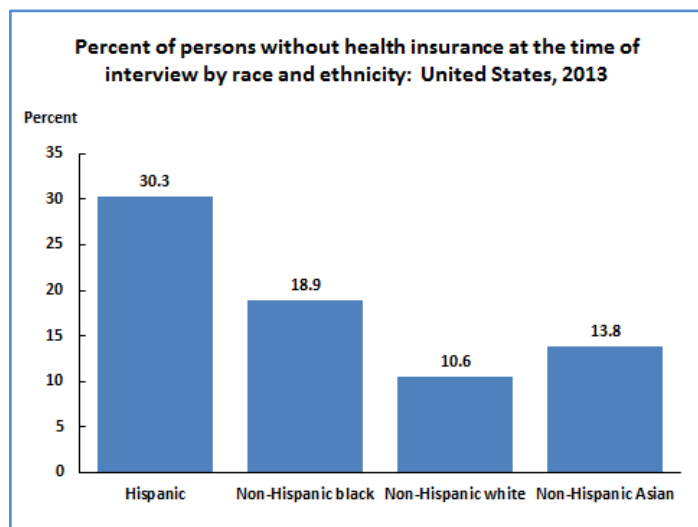


*American Indian or Alaska Native (AI/AN), Asian or Pacific Islander (API)

Source: National Vital Statistics System, 1991, 2007, 2012.

Health insurance coverage is an important determinant of access to health care. Access to health care, which includes having a usual source of care, is important for preventive care and prompt treatment of illness and injury.

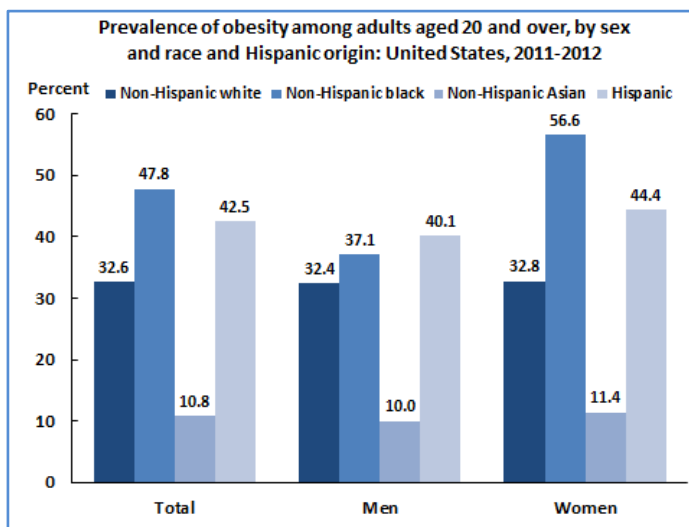
NCHS data from 2013 show that Hispanics (30.3 percent) and non-Hispanic blacks (18.9 percent), were more likely to lack health insurance at the time of the interview than non-Hispanic Asians (13.8 percent) or non-Hispanic whites (10.6 percent).



Source: National Health Interview Survey, 2013.

Obesity is associated with increased risk of a number of conditions, including diabetes, cardiovascular disease, hypertension, and certain cancers, and with an increased risk of disability.

The prevalence of obesity among non-Hispanic Asian adults (10.8 percent) was lower than among non-Hispanic white (32.6 percent), Hispanic (42.5 percent) and non-Hispanic black (47.8 percent) adults.



NOTE: Obesity defined as BMI ≥ 30 kg/m²

Source: National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, 2011-2012.

Sources for Racial and Ethnic Disparity Data

- **National Vital Statistics System** – collects information from birth and death certificates in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, including detailed race/ethnicity characteristics. Because all births and deaths are included in this database, it provides the detail needed for research on disparities. (<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nvss.htm>)
- **National Health Interview Survey** – collects information on the nation's health through personal household interviews that measure: health status and disability, selected conditions, insurance coverage, access to care, use of health services, immunizations, health behaviors, and the ability to perform daily activities. (<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhis.htm>)
- **National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES)** – collects comprehensive information about the health and diet of people in the United States. NHANES combines home interviews with physical examinations and laboratory tests conducted in mobile examination centers and can directly measure health conditions, providing reliable information on health and disease. (<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhanes.htm>)