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# Health Disparities: Race and Hispanic Origin

Provisional Death Counts for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

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Note: Provisional death counts are based on death certificate data received and coded by the National Center for Health Statistics as of January 6, 2021. Death counts are delayed, and may differ from other published sources (see Technical Notes). Counts will be continuously updated. Privacy Date: Additional information will be added to this site as available.

As of January 4, 2021, the tables and datasets on this page include data from January 2020 through the most recent data period. Cumulative totals may not equal the sum of previous reports which were restricted to include data from the week ending February 1, 2020.

The provisional counts for coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) deaths are based on a current flow of mortality data in the National Vital Statistics System. National provisional counts include deaths occurring within the 50 states and the District of Columbia that have been received and coded as of the data cutoff date. It is important to note that it can take several weeks for death records to be submitted to National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), processed, coded, and tabulated. Therefore, counts do not include all deaths that occurred during the period and counts for recent time periods can increase substantially as additional records are received. Counts for the most recent time periods, and counts for earlier weeks are continually revised and may increase or decrease as new and updated death certificate data are received from the states. COVID-19 death counts may also differ from other published sources, as data currently are lagged by an average of 1–2 weeks.

## Health Disparities: Race and Hispanic origin

The following figures and tables contain the following indicators that can be used to illustrate potential differences in the burden of deaths due to COVID-19 according to race and ethnicity:

- **Count of COVID-19 deaths:** Number of deaths due to COVID-19 reported for each race and Hispanic origin group.
- **Distribution of COVID-19 deaths (%):** Deaths for each group as a percent of the total number of COVID-19 deaths reported.
- **Unweighted distribution of population (%):** Population of each group as a percent of the total population.
- **Weighted distribution of population (%)** *(shown in Table 1 and Figure 1 only)*: Population of each group as a percent of the total population, adjusted to account for how the race and Hispanic origin population is distributed in relation to the geographic areas impacted by COVID-19. See the Notes section for more information.

For more information about the definitions for race and Hispanic origin categories, methods for calculating population distributions, and for adjusting percent distributions by age, see the Notes section below the interactive charts.

To download the data, Click/Click here to download

The count of COVID-19 deaths, distribution of COVID-19 deaths, and unweighted distribution of the population are also displayed in a set of interactive charts.

**Table 1. Count and percent distribution of deaths involving coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) with the distribution of weighted and unweighted percent population by race and Hispanic origin group**, for the United States and jurisdictions with more than 100 deaths available for analysis.

The interactive charts contain the following additional indicators to illustrate potential differences in the burden of deaths due to COVID-19 by race and ethnicity and age:

- **Figure 2 shows differences between the percent of COVID-19 deaths and the percent of the population represented by each race and Hispanic origin group.** This chart illustrates whether certain race or Hispanic origin groups represent a higher or lower share of COVID-19 deaths than the share of the group they are distributed within the population adjusting for age differences across the groups.
- **Figure 3 shows the ratio between the percent of COVID-19 deaths and the percent of the unweighted population represented by each race and Hispanic origin group.** These charts illustrate whether certain race or Hispanic origin groups represent a higher or lower share of COVID-19 deaths than the share of the group they are distributed within the population, both across and within age groups.
  - **Figure 3a groups the horizontal axis by race and Hispanic origin** to show disparities by age within each race and Hispanic origin group.
  - **Figure 3b groups the horizontal axis by age** to show disparities by race and Hispanic origin within each age group.

For more information about the methods for calculating population distributions, and for adjusting percent distributions by age, see the Notes section below the interactive charts.

For unadjusted and adjusted estimates of disparities, Click here to download

## Death Counts by Age and Race and Hispanic Origin

Table 2 has death counts for COVID-19 by race and Hispanic origin group by age group for the United States. For data on race and Hispanic origin by age at the state level, Click here to download

**NOTICE TO USERS: The data file for deaths by race and age at the state level has been updated on September 2, 2020 to include the following age groups in addition to the age groups that are routinely included: 0–17, 18–29, 30–39, 40–49, and 50–64. These age groups are consistent with categories used across CDC COVID-19 surveillance pages. When analyzing these data, the user should keep in mind that the data are provisional. Summing across all age categories provided will result in double counting deaths from certain age groups.**

**Table 2. Distribution of deaths involving coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) by age and by race and Hispanic origin group**, for the United States.

## County-level data

County data on race and Hispanic origin is available for counties with more than 100 COVID-19 deaths. This file contains counts of deaths from COVID-19 and all deaths, the percentage of deaths due to COVID-19 by race and Hispanic origin group, the percentage of all deaths by race and Hispanic origin group, and the percentage of the population by race and Hispanic origin group. A separate file for state classification is also included, based on the 2013 National Center for Health Statistics Urban-Rural Classification Scheme for Counties (https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data_access/urban_rural.htm). Deaths are cumulative from the week ending February 1, 2020 to the most recent reporting week Click here to download

# Notes

## Race and Hispanic Origin Classification:

Race and Hispanic origin categories are based on the 1997 Office of Management and Budget (OMB) revised standards for the collection and reporting of race. Race and Hispanic origin are two distinct identifiers and are reported separately on the death certificate. Therefore, data shown by Hispanic origin and race are based on a combination of the two attributes for the non-Hispanic population. Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race. Categories shown in this report for race and Hispanic origin groups—non-Hispanic single-race white, non-Hispanic single-race black or African American, non-Hispanic single-race American Indian or Alaska Native (AIAN), and non-Hispanic single-race Asian—differ from the bridged-race categories shown in reports using mortality data for years prior to 2018.

Race and Hispanic origin data from death certificates are not available for 0.3% of all deaths and 2.7% of deaths involving COVID-19. Death data for Hispanic, non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaska Native, non-Hispanic Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, and non-Hispanic multiracial persons may underestimate decedents in reporting Hispanic origin or race on the death certificate compared with censuses, surveys, and birth certificates. The latest research on race and Hispanic origin misclassification on death certificates shows that deaths are underreported by 3% for non-Hispanic AIAN, 3% for non-Hispanic API, and 3% for Hispanic decedents. See Technical Notes for additional information.

## Crude (unadjusted) estimates of disparities:

Unweighted population distributions along with comparison between the distribution of deaths and each of the population distributions are provided. The unweighted distributions show the observed percent of the population that falls into each race and Hispanic origin group, either for a given state or for the United States overall. These distributions are used to calculate the crude (unadjusted) estimates of the percent of COVID-19 deaths experienced by some groups relative to their observed percent of the population.

*Example: The unweighted population distribution shows that 13% of the state/U.S. population is non-Hispanic black. This percentage can be compared to the distribution of deaths by race and Hispanic origin, which shows that 24% of COVID-19 deaths in the U.S. have occurred among the non-Hispanic black population (data as of July 22, 2020).*

## Adjusted estimates of disparities:

Adjustments to the population distributions: In April and May 2020, the majority of COVID-19 deaths in the U.S. occurred in urban areas that have a larger percentage of their populations that are non-Hispanic black, non-Hispanic Asian, or Hispanic, and a smaller percentage that are non-Hispanic white. *Weighted population distributions* use county-level data to more closely align the population distributions for each race and Hispanic origin group with the areas in the U.S. that have been the geographic planning of COVID-19 deaths, weighted population distributions, which more closely matched the areas initially most affected by COVID-19 deaths, were provided in order to reflect differential risk within the areas most affected by COVID-19 deaths. As the pandemic has become more widespread across the U.S., there is less need to align the population distributions with the areas initially most affected by COVID-19 deaths. Therefore, only unweighted population distributions are no longer included in the data presentations, the estimates will be found in the publicly available downloadable data file.

Adjusting for age differences: Another important factor that can be adjusted for is age. As death due to COVID-19 varies by age, the distribution of deaths across race and ethnic groups will be affected by the age distribution of each of the groups. Differences between the percent of deaths among each race and Hispanic origin group and their corresponding percent of the weighted or unweighted population in each age group is in order to provide information about how disparities in deaths vary by age. The age-specific distributions are shown in two charts. One chart shows the horizontal axis by race and Hispanic origin group, with the different colored bars showing the age groups within race and Hispanic origin groups. The second chart shows the horizontal axis grouped by age, which more easily shows disparities by race and Hispanic origin within each of the age groups. Additionally, age-adjusted estimates of disparities are shown. Age-adjusted distributions show what the distribution of deaths would be if each race and Hispanic origin group had the same age distribution as groups for COVID-19 deaths and the population.

For both age and geographic data, the magnitude of the differences between crude and adjusted estimates will vary by state, and will also vary over time as the pandemic progresses in the U.S. and mortality changes (i.e., if the pattern shifts from deaths occurring in more urban areas to more suburban or rural areas, or from older to younger age groups).

See Technical Notes for the methods used to calculate weighted percentages and age-standardized distributions.

## Understanding the Numbers: Provisional Death Counts and COVID-19

*Provisional death counts deliver the most complete and accurate picture of bias lost to COVID-19. They are based on death certificates, which are the most reliable source of data and contain information not available anywhere else, including comorbid conditions, race and ethnicity, and place of death.*

## How It Works

**The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) uses incoming data from death certificates to produce provisional COVID-19 death counts.** These include deaths occurring within the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

**NCHS also provides summaries that examine deaths in specific categories and in greater geographic detail**, such as deaths by county and by race and Hispanic origin.

**COVID-19 deaths are identified using a new ICD-10 code.** When COVID-19 is reported as a cause of death, it is assigned the code U07.1. Previously, COVID-19 often took 1–2 researchers to assign a code.

## Why These Numbers are Different

Provisional death counts may not match counts from other sources, such as media reports or counts from county health departments. Counts may differ for a variety of reasons, including these:

- **Death certificates take time to be completed.** There are many steps to filing out and submitting a death certificate. Waiting for test results can create additional delays.
- **States report at different rates.** Currently, 63% of all U.S. deaths are reported within 10 days of the date of death, but there is significant variation between states.
- **It takes extra time to code COVID-19 deaths.** While 80% of deaths are electronically processed and coded by NCHS within minutes, most deaths from COVID-19 must be coded by a person, which takes an average of 7 days.
- **Other reporting systems use different definitions or methods for counting deaths.**

## Things to know about the data

**Provisional counts are not final and are subject to change.** Counts from previous weeks are continually revised as more records are received and processed.

**Provisional data are not yet complete.** Counts will not include all deaths that occurred during a given time period, especially for more recent periods. However, we can estimate how complete our numbers are by looking at the average number of deaths reported in previous years.

**Death counts should not be compared across states.** Some states report deaths on a daily basis, while other states report deaths weekly or monthly. State vital record reporting may also be affected or delayed by COVID-19 response efforts.

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