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 processed by the National Center for Health Statistics as of February 10, 2021. Death counts are delayed and may differ from other published sources (see Technical Notes). Counts will be updated every Wednesday by 5pm. 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 present data period. Cumulative death counts for the 52 weeks of 2020 are provided for comparison 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 death counts are based on all deaths from all jurisdictions for which a death certificate for mortality that has 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, the data shown on this page may be incomplete, and will likely not include all deaths occurring in the last few weeks of the data. Death counts for more recent weeks or days, death counts for specific areas or subgroups of the population may be incomplete or decrease as new and updated death certificate data are received from the states by NCHS. COVID-19 death counts shown here may 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 population of deaths due to COVID-19
- **Unexposed distribution of population (%):** Population for each group as a percent of the total population
- **Weighted distribution of population (%):** *(shown in Table 1 only)* Population of each group as percent of the total population after accounting for the impact of COVID-19 deaths on the population composition (see Technical Notes section for more information.

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

To download the data, Click here to download.

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

Figure 1. Crude and age-adjusted presents of COVID-19 deaths and unweighted population distributions by race and Hispanic origin

Table 1. Count and percent distribution of deaths involving coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) with distribution of the unexposed population and weighted distribution of the population by Hispanic origin and combined Latino and participants with more than 100 deaths available for analysis.

Table 1 shows the counts and 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 distributed by race and Hispanic origin group, unadjusted and adjusted for age.** This chart illustrates which racial groups or Hispanic origin groups represent a higher or lower share of COVID-19 deaths compared with their share of the population distributed within the population, both across and within age groups.
- **Figure 3a and 3b show age-specific differences 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 which racial groups or Hispanic origin groups represent a higher or lower share of COVID-19 deaths compared with their share of the population distributed within the population, both across and within age groups.
  - **Figure 3a groups the historical sets by race and Hispanic origin** to show disparities by age within each race and Hispanic origin group.
  - **Figure 3b groups the historical sets by age** to show disparities by race and Hispanic origin within each age group.

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

How to Interpret Figures 2 and 3.

Figure 2. Difference between the percent of COVID-19 deaths and the unexposed population distributions by race and Hispanic origin, all ages, unadjusted

Figure 3a. Age-specific differences between the percent of COVID-19 deaths and the unweighted population distributions by race and Hispanic origin

Figure 3b. Differences by race and Hispanic origin between the percent of COVID-19 deaths and the unweighted population distributions by age

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. For data on deaths involving COVID-19 by week, HHS region, rural or Hispanic origin, and age, 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, 50-59, 60-69, 70-79, 80-89, 90-99, 100-109, and 110 and older. Users should use CDC COVID-19 surveillance pages, When analyzing the file, the user should make sure to select only the desired age groups. Summing across all age groups will result in double counting of deaths and inflated totals.

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 100 COVID-19 deaths. This file contains counts of death for COVID-19 and all deaths, the percentage of deaths due to COVID-19 by race and Hispanic origin, and the percentage of the population in each race and Hispanic origin group. The percentage of by race and Hispanic origin group. Urban-Rural classification is also included, based on the 2013 Vintage of the Health Statistics Urban-Rural Classification Scheme for Counties (https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data_access/urban_rural.htm). Deaths are cumulative for the 52 weeks 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 reported on most death certificates and are recorded on death certificates. Therefore, data shown by Hispanic origin and race are either a combination of the two attributes for the non-Hispanic population. Data shown for the Hispanic population include persons of any race. The race and Hispanic origin groups shown—non-Hispanic single-race white, non-Hispanic single-race black or African American, non-Hispanic single-race Asian, non-Hispanic single-race American Indian and Alaska Native, and non-Hispanic single-race Asian—differ from the bridged-race categories shown in reports using mortality data for prior years (1-9).

Race and Hispanic origin data from death certificates are not available for 5.2% of all deaths and 5.7% of deaths involving COVID-19. Death data for Hispanic, non-Hispanic White, non-Hispanic Black, non-Hispanic Asian, and non-Hispanic American Indian/Alaska Native persons are based on death certificates reporting Hispanic origin or race on the death certificate compared with censuses, postcensal estimates, and intercensal estimates based on race and Hispanic origin. Hispanic/Latino decedents with certificates show fewer deaths are underreported by 23% for non-Hispanic AIAN, 2% for non-Hispanic Asian, and 2% for Hispanic decedents. Technical Notes for additional information.

Crude (unadjusted) estimates of disparities:

Unweighted population distributions along with comparison between the unweighted distributions and the distribution of deaths provide a starting point. 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 in the United States overall. These unweighted distributions can be used to obtain a crude (unadjusted) estimate of the percent of COVID-19 deaths experienced by some groups relative to their observed proportion of the population.

Example: The unweighted population distribution shows that 13% of the total U.S. population is Hispanic. If 13% of COVID-19 deaths occurred among persons with Hispanic origin, the distribution of deaths by race and Hispanic origin would show that 13% of COVID-19 deaths in the U.S. have occurred among the non-Hispanic Black population (data as of July 27, 2020).

Adjusted estimates of disparities:

Adjustments to the population distributions: In April and May 2020, the majority of COVID-19 deaths occurred among persons aged 65 and older. The age distribution 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 account for the impact of COVID-19 deaths on the population composition with the specific areas where COVID-19 deaths were occurring. To account for the geographic clustering of COVID-19 deaths, weighted population distributions, which account for the impact of COVID-19 deaths on the population, are shown. This is intended to provide a further 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 adjust the population distributions with the specific areas where experiencing COVID-19 outbreaks and mortality. While weighted estimates are no longer significantly different from unweighted estimates, we can still see in Table 1 and in the visualizations. Back TOC

Adjustments for age distributions: 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. Age-adjustment allows for a fairer comparison between the race and Hispanic group and their corresponding percent of the overall population. Age-adjusted estimates are shown by age group in order to provide information about how disparities in deaths vary by age. The age-specific distributions are shown in two charts. One chart groups the historical sets by race and Hispanic origin, to more easily show disparities by age within each race and Hispanic origin group. The second chart groups the historical sets by age, to more easily show disparities by race and Hispanic origin within each of the age groups. Additionally, age-adjusted estimates are shown in Figure 2 for the total COVID-19 deaths. Age-specific charts of the population are shown. These age-specific distributions show what disparities would look like if the age distribution was the same across all race and Hispanic origin groups for both COVID-19 deaths and the population.

For both age and geographic data, the magnitude of the differences between crude and adjusted estimates will differ by state, and will also vary over time as the geographic pattern of COVID-19 mortality changes (i.e., if the pattern shifts from one region of the country to another, the estimates will change to reflect the shifting pattern).

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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 lives 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 comorbidities, race and ethnicity, and place of death.

How it Works

When the Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) uses incoming data from death certificates to produce provisional death counts, These include deaths occurring within the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

NCHS also provides summaries that examine deaths in specific subpopulations, such as geographic detail, such as state, county and by age 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 coded to a "probable" or "presumed" cause — the death is coded as U07.X. This can include cases with or without laboratory confirmation.

Why These Numbers are Different

Provisional death counts track deaths reported from death certificates, such as media reports or numbers from county health departments. Counts by NCHS often track 1-2 weeks behind other data.

- **Death certificates take time to be completed.** There are many steps to the process of completing a death certificate. Waiting for medical tests 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 can take some time to code COVID-19 deaths.** While 80% of deaths are electronically processed and coded by NCHS within seven days, 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 death counts are not to be used to subject to change. Counts from previous weeks are subject to change as more death certificates are received.

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 to a daily basis, while other states report deaths weekly or monthly. Differences in reporting may also be affected or delayed by COVID-19 related response activities.

For more detailed technical information, visit the Provisional Death Counts for Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Technical Notes page.

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