Health Disparities: Race and Hispanic Origin

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

Contents

Note: Provisional death counts are based on death certificate data received and coded by the National Center for Health Statistics as of September 30, 2020. 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.

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 date specified. 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 that occurred during a given time period, especially for the more recent time periods. Death counts for earlier weeks are continually revised and may increase 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

Table 1 contains 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 (%):** Population of each group as percent of the total population after accounting for how the race and Hispanic origin population is distributed in relation to the geographic areas impacted by COVID-19

To download the data, Click here to download.

The data in Table 1 are also displayed in a set of interactive charts.

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

Select a jurisdiction:

United States

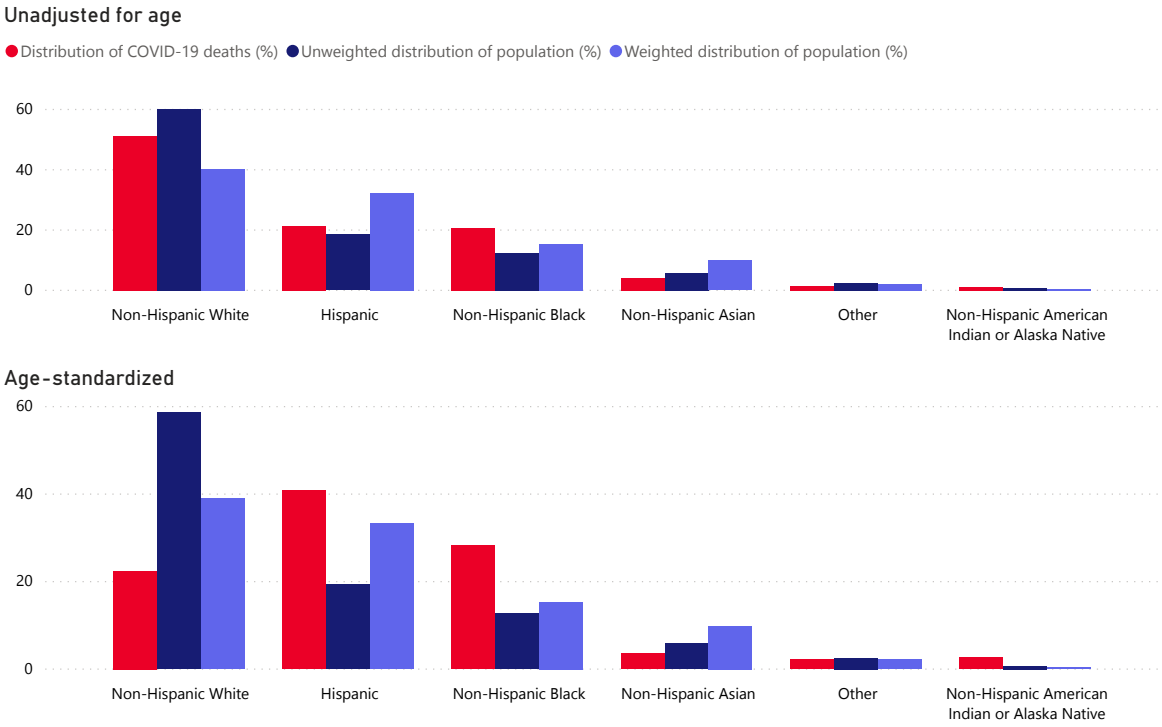

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Table 1. Count and percent distribution of deaths involving coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) with distribution of the weighted and unweighted percent population by race and Hispanic origin group[1], for the United States and jurisdictions with more 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, unadjusted and adjusted for age.** This chart illustrates whether certain race or Hispanic origin groups represent a higher or lower share of COVID-19 deaths compared to how these groups are distributed within the population (both unweighted and weighted), adjusting for age differences across the groups. Select the 'all ages, standardized' button to display age-standardized estimates. Select the 'all ages, unadjusted' button to display estimates that are not adjusted for differences by age.
- **Figures 3a and 3b show age-specific differences between the percent of COVID-19 deaths and the percent of the weighted and 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 compared with how these groups are distributed within the population, both across and within age groups. Select the unweighted or weighted population distributions using the buttons above the charts.
    - **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 weighted and unweighted population distributions, and for adjusting percent distributions by age, see the Notes section below the interactive charts.

How to interpret figures 2 and 3:

For each race and Hispanic origin group and/or age group, the bars represent the difference between the percent of COVID-19 deaths and the percent of the population.

Bars above 0 suggest that a given race/ethnicity group is experiencing a **disproportionately high** percent of COVID-19 deaths relative to their percent of the population. The higher the bar, the larger the disparity.

Bars near 0 indicate that there is little or no disparity for a given race/ethnicity group. The percent of COVID-19 deaths experienced by that group is similar to their percent of the population.

Bars below 0 indicate that the percent of COVID-19 deaths experienced by a specific race/ethnicity group is **smaller** than their percent of the population.

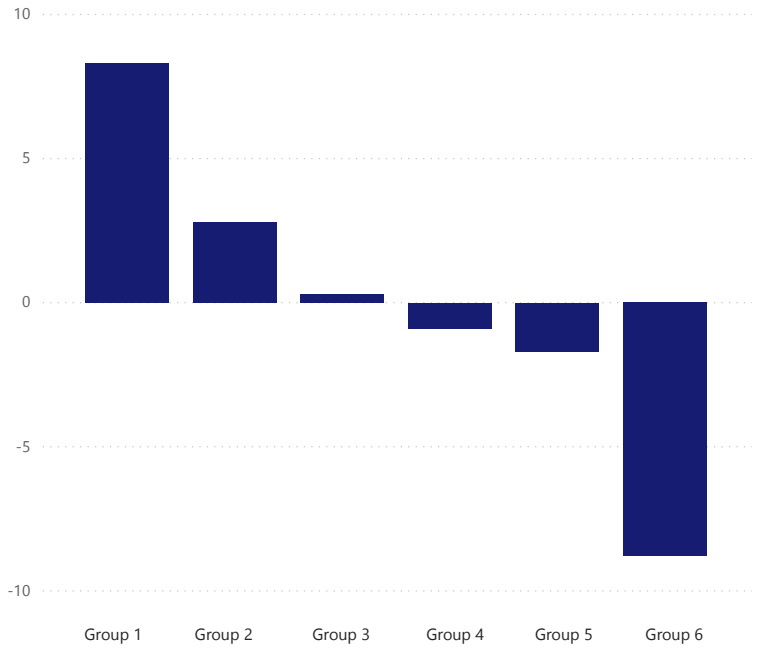
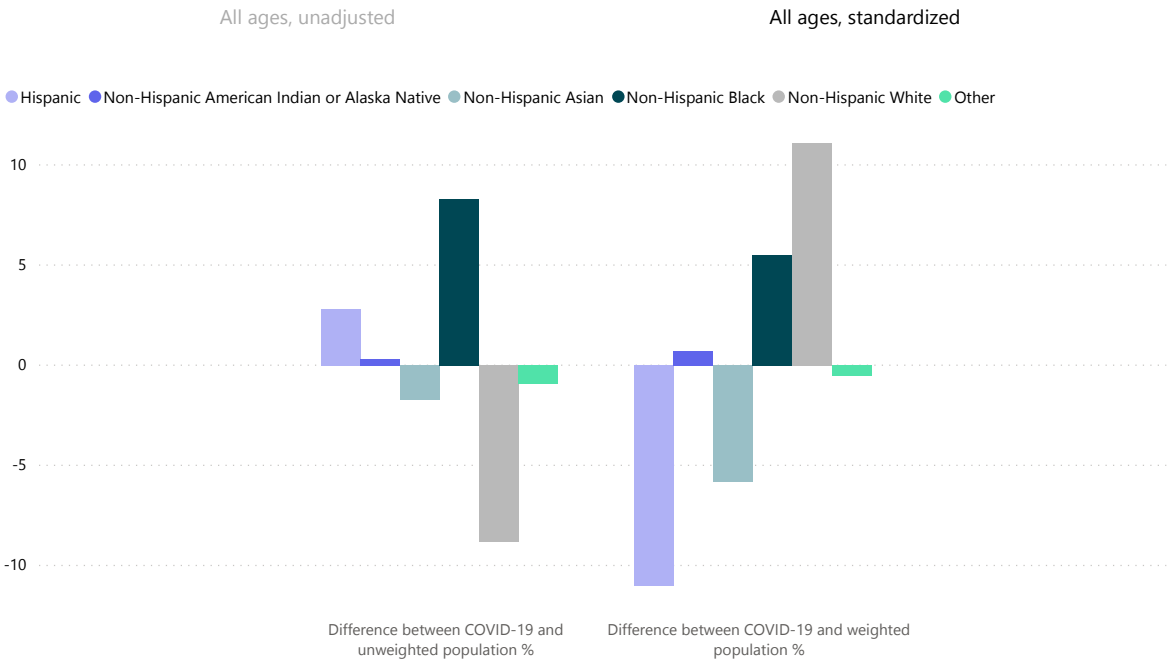


Figure 2. Difference between the percent of COVID-19 deaths and the population distributions by race and Hispanic origin: the impact of adjusting for age and geography

Select a jurisdiction:

United States



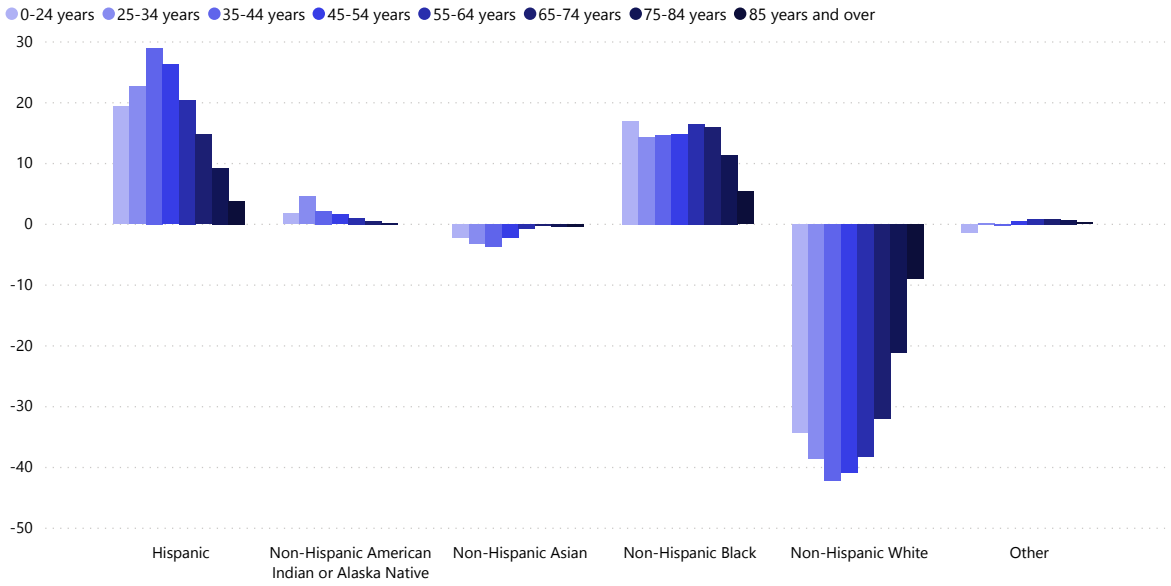
Data Table

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

Select a jurisdiction:

United States

Difference between COVID-19 and unweighted population % Difference between COVID-19 and weighted population %



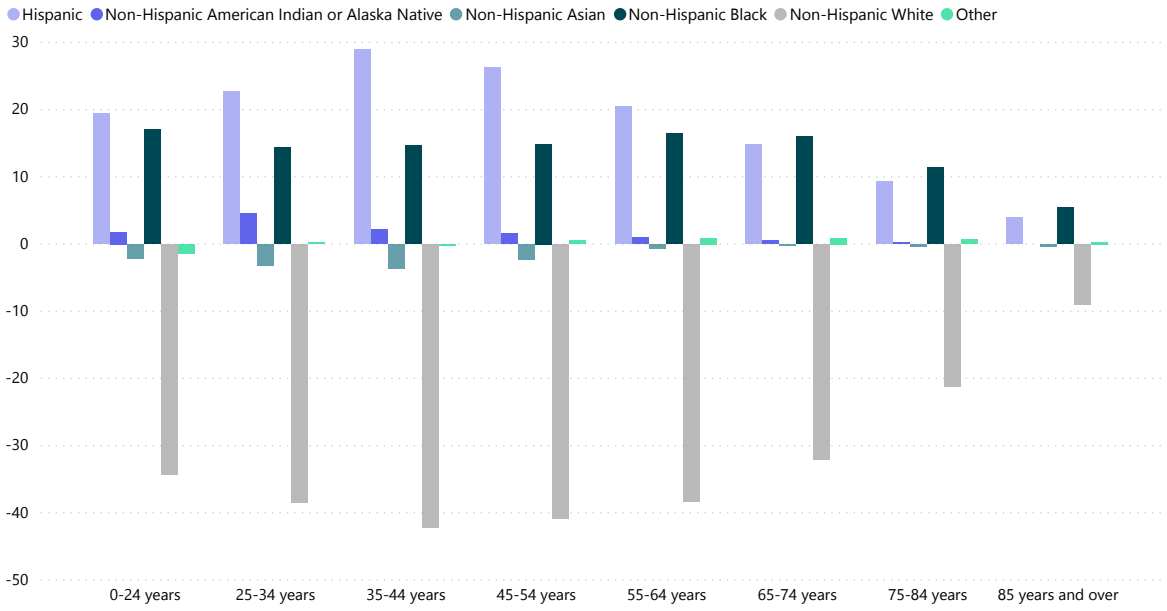
Data Table

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

Select a jurisdiction:

United States

Difference between COVID-19 and unweighted population % Difference between COVID-19 and weighted population %



Data Table

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Crude (unadjusted) estimates of disparities:

Unweighted and weighted 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 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 percent of the population.

Example: The unweighted population distribution shows that 13% of the total 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 nearly 25% 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: Race and Hispanic origin populations are not distributed equally geographically across the US or within states, and certain race and ethnicity groups may be found in higher proportions in areas where there have been more COVID-19 cases and deaths. In the early months of the pandemic, 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 with the population distributions in the specific areas where COVID-19 deaths are occurring. Weighted population distributions can be used to obtain adjusted estimates that account for the geographic clustering of COVID-19 deaths.

Example: The weighted population distribution shows that the percentage of the non-Hispanic black population in the areas most impacted by COVID-19 is 17% (compared to 13% unweighted). This adjusted percentage can then be compared to the distribution of deaths by race and Hispanic origin showing that nearly 25% of COVID-19 deaths in the U.S. have occurred among the non-Hispanic black population (data as of July 22, 2020).

Note that although the non-Hispanic black population is still overrepresented among the distribution of COVID-19 deaths, the magnitude of the difference between the distribution of deaths and distribution of the population will vary depending on whether it is calculated using the unweighted or weighted population distribution.

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. Differences between the percent of deaths among each race and Hispanic origin group and their corresponding percent of the weighted or unweighted population 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 horizontal axis by race and Hispanic origin, to more easily show disparities across all of 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-standardized differences between a given group's share of COVID-19 deaths and share of the population are shown. These age-standardized 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 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.

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, 30-49, and 50-64. The new age groups are consistent with categories used across 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 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[1], 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 data file contains counts of death for 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. Urban-rural 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.

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 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 – or when it is listed as a "probable" or "presumed" cause — the death is coded as **U07.1**. This can include cases with or without laboratory confirmation.

Why These Numbers are Different

Provisional death counts may not match counts from other sources, 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 filling 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 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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