

2009 Health Disparity Fact Sheet

African Americans/Blacks in Colorado



This fact sheet provides information about some of the major health indicators for the African American/Black population in Colorado. Like other communities of color, African Americans/Blacks experience some differences in health, risk factors and behaviors in comparison to other population groups. The data presented show comparisons between the African American/Black population and the State's population as a whole and identifies where there are differences. The disparity column shows if the African American/Black rate is statistically worse (red), better (green) or the same (white) as the state rate. If it is the same, that means there is no statistically significant difference.

There are roughly 214,000 African Americans/Blacks in Colorado, which is almost five percent of the State's population. (2007 data, State Demography Office, Colorado Department of Local Affairs)

	African American/ Black Coloradans	All Coloradans	Disparity
Demographics			
Median household income ¹	\$34,563	\$52,015	Worse
Percent of population living below poverty ¹	22.7%	12.0%	Worse
High school graduation rate ²	65.4%	75.0%	Worse

- The median household income for African Americans/Blacks is \$17,452 less than the state median.
- Almost twice as many African Americans/Blacks are living below the poverty level than the overall state population.
- Fewer African Americans/Blacks graduate from high school than the state's population as a whole.

	African American/ Black Coloradans	All Coloradans	Disparity
Maternal Child Health			
Infant mortality (<i>infant deaths per 1,000 live births</i>) ³	16.9	6.1	Worse
Low birth weight births ³	15.2%	9.0%	Worse
Unintended pregnancy ⁴	53.4%	39.7%	Worse
Births to teens ages 15-17 (<i>births per 1,000 population, 2006</i>) ³	26.9	23.7	Same
Women reporting 3 or more stressors during pregnancy ⁴	43.9%	27.0%	Worse
Women who drank during last three months of pregnancy ⁴	6.2%	10.8%	Same
Women who smoked during last three months of pregnancy ⁴	9.6%	10.3%	Same
Childhood obesity (ages 2-14) ⁵	18.4%	13.8%	Same

- Infant death and low weight births are much higher than the population as a whole.
- More than half of all African American/Black births are from unplanned pregnancies.
- The teen birth rate is essentially the same as the state rate and has decreased substantially over the last 15 years.
- African American/Blacks report more stress, but about the same amount of drinking and smoking during pregnancy.
- African American/Black children are somewhat more likely to be obese (*not statistically significant*).

	African American/ Black Coloradans	All Coloradans	Disparity
Health and risk behaviors⁶			
Cigarette smoking	20.7%	19.1%	Same
Binge drinking (5 or more drinks in one sitting)	11.5%	16.8%	Better
No physical activity	21.2%	17.7%	Same
Eat fewer than 5 fruits and vegetables per day	81.2%	74.9%	Worse
Obese (BMI>=30)	23.6%	18.0%	Worse
Overweight (BMI>=25)	61.6%	54.5%	Worse
Mental health was not good 8 or more days (in the past 30 days)	16.2%	11.9%	Worse

African Americans/Blacks are more likely to exhibit many risk behaviors than the State's population as a whole. They are:

- Less likely to engage in binge drinking.
- Less likely to eat five or more fruits and vegetables a day, and more likely to be overweight or obese.
- Just as likely to participate in some kind of physical activity as all Coloradans.
- More likely to experience more than one week a month of poor mental health in the last month.

	African American/ Black Coloradans	All Coloradans	Disparity
Health care and access⁶			
No health insurance	16.4%	16.6%	Same
Women 40+ who have not had a mammogram in last 2 years	27.8%	28.4%	Same
Women who have not had a pap test in last 3 years	11.7%	13.2%	Same
Have high blood pressure	30.1%	20.7%	Worse
Have diabetes	9.1%	4.9%	Worse
Have asthma	11.2%	8.1%	Same

- African American/Black women are just as likely to have had a mammogram or pap test as all Colorado women.
- More African American/Blacks have been told by a doctor that they have high blood pressure.
- More have been diagnosed with diabetes than the State's population as a whole.

	African American/ Black Coloradans	All Coloradans	Disparity
Infectious Diseases (Incidence rates per 100,000 population)			
Tuberculosis ⁷	11.0	2.4	Worse
Gonorrhea ⁸	473.9	49.9	Worse
HIV/AIDS ⁸	50.2	12.8	Worse

- African Americans/Blacks have a higher rate of new cases of infectious diseases than the state population. Their rates for gonorrhea and HIV/AIDS are the highest rates of any racial/ethnic group.

10 leading causes of death⁹	
African American/Black Coloradans	All Coloradans
Cancer	Heart Disease
Heart Disease (tie for 1 st)	Cancer
Stroke	Chronic Respiratory Diseases
Chronic Respiratory Diseases	Stroke
Unintentional Injuries	Unintentional Injuries
Diabetes	Alzheimer's Disease
Alzheimer's Disease	Flu and Pneumonia
Kidney Disease	Diabetes
Flu and Pneumonia	Suicide
Atherosclerosis	Atherosclerosis

- The top two leading causes of death, cancer and heart disease, are the same for African Americans/Blacks as they are for the State's population as a whole. Diabetes is ranked sixth for African Americans/Blacks, but 8th for the State. Kidney disease is in the top 10 causes of death for African American/Blacks, but not for the state as a whole. Suicide is one of the state's top 10 causes of death, but is not for the African American/Black population.

¹ American Community Survey, 2006 (tables S1903 and S1701)

² Colorado Department of Education, 2007

³ Vital Statistics, 2002-2006, Health Statistics Section, Colorado Department Public Health and Environment

⁴ Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System, 2004-2006, Health Statistics Section, Colorado Department Public Health and Environment

⁵ Colorado Child Health Survey, 2005-2007, Health Statistics Section, Colorado Department Public Health and Environment

⁶ Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2004-07, Health Statistics Section, Colorado Department Public Health and Environment

⁷ Tuberculosis Program, 2002-06, Disease Control and Environmental Epidemiology Division, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

⁸ STI/HIV Section, 2002-06, Disease Control and Environmental Epidemiology Division, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment

⁹ Vital Statistics, 2002-2006 age adjusted rates, Health Statistics Section, Colorado Department Public Health and Environment

For more information or for a copy of the full 2009 Health Disparities Report, go to www.cdphe.state.co.us/ohd

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