

**Question:**

How do racial disparities affect maternal mortality rate in African American women?

**Summary:**

Racial disparities continue to rise for African American women compared to other women in the United States. "It is estimated that non-Hispanic Black women are three to almost four times more likely to die while pregnant or within 1 year postpartum than their non-Hispanic White and Latina counterparts" (Chinn, 2021). Have we as a society asked why African American women are three times as likely to die during childbirth than other races. The difficulties they face not only as women, but women of color. African American women are less likely to have the access to proper healthcare or advantages that other races may have available. The hospital that these women receive health care at may not be the same quality as some of the other races are receiving. "Qualitative research reveals that many non-Hispanic Black women giving birth in low-performing hospitals experience poor patient-provider communication and difficulties in obtaining appropriate prenatal and postpartum care" (Chinn, 2021) Some research shows that it is related to the chronic conditions that are related to the African American population such as obesity, cardiovascular diseases and bleeding or blood disorders. "Some of the leading causes of maternal morbidities resulting in pregnancy-associated death occur more in non-Hispanic Black women (e.g., hemorrhage, infection [sepsis], thrombotic pulmonary/other embolism, and pregnancy-associated hypertensive disorders)" (Chinn, 2021)

These women are also less educated when it comes to factors that put them at risk before pregnancy, unintentional pregnancies and postpartum care. "Although the postpartum period presents an opportunity to intervene to improve this trajectory, the proportion of low-income women who attend a postpartum visit is low." (Howell, 2018) These women are less likely to follow up on care because they simply cannot afford it or maybe be able to even find transportation to the appointments. Not only is it physical issues these women face, but also mental health isn't addressed as much. Postpartum depression is also a risk factor for these women during postpartum care. They are more likely to have lower income, decrease satisfaction in marital status and other stressors. "Non-Hispanic Black mothers, in particular, experience higher rates of postpartum suicidal ideation (i.e., thoughts of suicide) relative to non-Hispanic white women" (Sandoiu, 2020) Overall all of these factor increase problems that African American women face with maternal health.

**Conclusion:**

In conclusion, after reading extensive research about racial disparities in African American women. We can help improve the problem of maternal mortality rate by addressing health risk

factor pre-pregnancy, getting them improved quality patient care and education during pregnancy, and more education on postpartum care and depression. Including the importance of follow up care and appointments during postpartum.

#### **Work Cited:**

#### **Primary Article**

Chinn, J. J., Martin, I. K., & Redmond, N. (2021). Health equity among black women in the United States. *Journal of Women's Health, 30*(2), 212–219.  
<https://doi.org/10.1089/jwh.2020.8868>

#### **Secondary Article**

HOWELL, E. L. I. Z. A. B. E. T. H. A. (2018). Reducing disparities in severe maternal morbidity and mortality. *Clinical Obstetrics & Gynecology, 61*(2), 387–399.  
<https://doi.org/10.1097/grf.0000000000000349>

#### **Tertiary Article**

Sandoui, A. (2020, July 17). *Postpartum depression in women of color: 'more work needs to be done'*. Medical News Today. Retrieved November 13, 2022, from <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/postpartum-depression-in-women-of-color-more-work-needs-to-be-done#1>