
African-Americans more vulnerable to COVID-19

By: RHC
20/04/2020



In the U.S, the African-American community is more vulnerable to COVID-19, according to social and demographic studies on the virus.

The reason for this exposure of the African-American population is not its genetics or physical conditions, but the systemic discrimination it suffers. Many of the non-white citizens of the United States are lacking health insurance, so they may also have underlying health problems that expose them to the virus. Also, because of the implicit discrimination, they are more likely to be denied testing and treatment.

On the other hand, according to data provided by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 37% of the U.S homeless population are Black/African-American. The figure is higher than other ethnic groups in the same situation. Those who live on the streets do not have access to adequate healthcare.

Racial stigmatization then becomes a severe social problem. The statistics that illustrate this problem alert us to the evident lack of protection in this sector. In cities such as Chicago, 70% of those who die from COVID-19 are African Americans, while in the state of Michigan the figure is 40%. Likewise, in New York, the state that has become the focus of the coronavirus, the greatest number of deaths is recorded in the Bronx, an area whose population is predominantly Black.

Diseases like diabetes, hypertension, obesity and asthma have historically disproportionately afflicted minority populations, particularly African Americans. For example, African Americans develop high blood pressure at younger ages than white Americans.

Among the most affected, Black women suffer double discrimination because of their racial and gender status. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, they earn less than Black men and lesser than women of color.

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Published on Cuba Si (<http://cubasi.cu>)

Although the virus does not distinguish between social condition and ethnicity, social benefit programs, distribution of wealth and therefore living conditions in the face of the virus do. Lori Lightfoot, mayor of Chicago, said the mortality rate among African Americans in her district is at 72 percent. The mayor of Washington, Muriel Bowser, said the African-American community is the most affected by the virus.

In total, estimates show that 70 percent of the deaths from COVID-19 in the United States are African-American.
