



Ethnicity, Race and Hepatitis

Hepatitis is a viral infection that affects the liver, and there are several types, including hepatitis A, B, C, D, and E. The incidence and prevalence of hepatitis can vary among different populations due to various factors such as socioeconomic status, access to healthcare, vaccination rates, risk behaviors, and prevalence of the virus in specific regions. Certain types of hepatitis have been found to disproportionately affect certain racial or ethnic groups in the United States.

Hepatitis A

[Hepatitis A](#) can be associated with inadequate sanitation and hygiene practices. While hepatitis A can affect people of any race, outbreaks have been reported in certain populations, including individuals experiencing homelessness or those who use illicit drugs.

Hepatitis B

Chronic [hepatitis B](#) infection is more prevalent among Asian and Pacific Islander (API) populations, including individuals of Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, and Filipino descent. The rate of new chronic hepatitis B cases among API persons was almost 12 times the rate among whites. This disparity is mainly due to higher rates of vertical transmission (from mother to child during childbirth) and migration from regions with a higher prevalence of hepatitis B. The rate of acute hepatitis B was highest among white and Black people compared with other race/ethnicity groups.

Hepatitis C

Historically, [hepatitis C](#) has been more prevalent among the baby boomer generation (born between 1945 and 1965) due to factors such as contaminated blood transfusions and unsafe medical practices before the implementation of universal screening. However, the incidence of hepatitis C has been rising among younger populations, particularly due to injection drug use. The rate of acute and chronic hepatitis C cases was highest among American Indian/Alaska Native persons compared with other racial/ethnicity groups. Death rates from hepatitis C among American Indians/Alaska Natives and Blacks were 3.2 times and 1.8 times higher, respectively, than among whites.

