

Health Disparities in New York City



New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

July 2011 No. 2

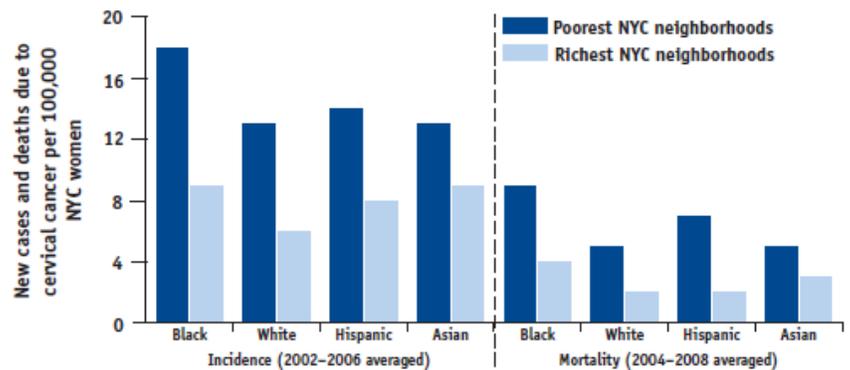
WHAT ARE HEALTH DISPARITIES?

Health disparities are differences in health between groups of people because of social inequalities, such as poor neighborhood environment, lower-quality health care, or other social factors. Health problems can be related to people's race/ethnicity, where they live, or how much money they have.

New Yorkers living in low-income neighborhoods have the most new cases of **cervical cancer** and the highest death rates

Cervical cancer death rates have not changed in the United States or in NYC since 2000. Regardless of race/ethnicity, new cases of cervical cancer and deaths due to cervical cancer are highest among women living in the poorest NYC neighborhoods.

New cervical cancer cases and deaths vary by race/ethnicity and neighborhood income



Rates are age-adjusted.

Sources: Bureau of Vital Statistics, NYC DOHMH, 2004-2008 averaged; NYC DOHMH neighborhood population estimates, 2004-2008 averaged; New York State Department of Health, Cancer Registry, 2002-2006 averaged.

WHY ARE BLACK AND POOR NEW YORKERS DYING MORE OFTEN FROM CANCER THAN OTHERS?

A risk factor is anything that increases a person's chance of getting a disease. Blacks and those living in low-income NYC neighborhoods tend to have more risk factors that may increase their chances of getting cancer and dying from the disease. The reasons for this are complex and may involve a number of things such as increased exposure to stress, poor access and low-quality healthcare, and higher rates of obesity and other chronic conditions that may worsen cancer treatment outcomes.

HOW CAN YOU REDUCE CERVICAL CANCER RISK?

Infection with certain strains of the human papilloma virus (HPV) – a sexually transmitted infection – is the cause of most cervical cancer. Women can reduce their risk of getting cervical cancer by *getting the HPV vaccine, practicing safe sex, and avoiding tobacco*. Sexually active women should have a *Pap test* at least every three years to test for cervical cancer.



Get vaccinated for the Human papilloma virus (HPV). HPV is a sexually transmitted infection and is the cause of most cervical cancers. The best protection against cervical cancer is vaccination with HPV vaccine. For more information about the HPV vaccine call 311.



Practice safe sex. Using a condom during sex can reduce the risk of getting HPV. For free NYC condoms call 311.



Quit smoking and limit other unhealthy habits – like too much alcohol – that may increase your risk of getting cancer. NYC has Quit Smoking programs in each borough. Call 311 for more information.



Get checked. Sexually active women should have a Pap test at least every three years to check for cervical cancer. For more information about cervical cancer and where to get checked call 311.