

Health Disparities in New York City

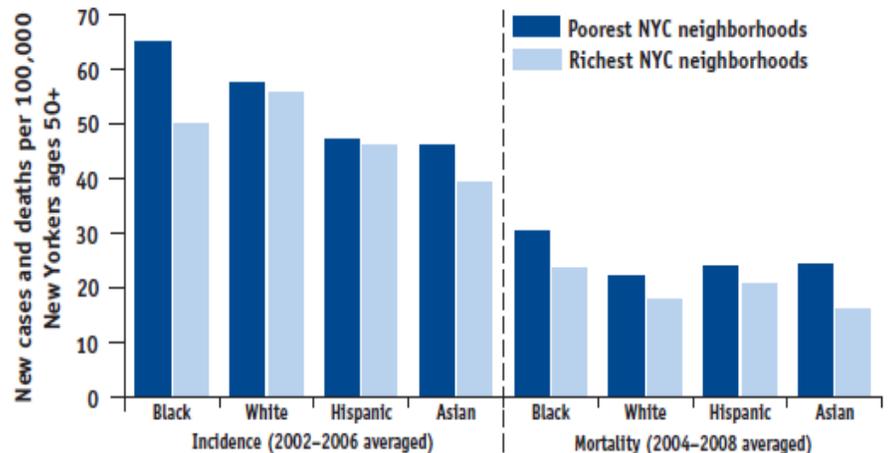
WHAT ARE HEALTH DISPARITIES?

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 are at greater risk of getting colorectal cancer and dying from it

New cases (or incidence) of colorectal cancer occur most often among New Yorkers living in the poorest neighborhoods. For black and Asian New Yorkers, especially, neighborhood poverty plays a major role in the number of new colorectal cancer cases. New Yorkers living in the poorest NYC neighborhoods, regardless of race/ethnicity, die from colorectal cancer more often than those living in wealthier neighborhoods.

New cases of colorectal cancer and death rates 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 COLORECTAL CANCER RISK?

Individuals may reduce their risk of getting colorectal cancer by engaging in healthy behaviors like *maintaining a healthy body weight, being physically active, limiting alcohol intake, avoiding tobacco, and controlling diabetes*. Adults ages 50 and older should have a colonoscopy every 10 years to test for cancer and pre-cancerous polyps (or growths).



Be active and get 30-60 minutes of exercise at least five days per week. **Shape Up** is a free, year-round fitness program for adults sponsored by the NYC Health Department. **Shape Up** is offered at community locations throughout the city. Call 311 for more information.



Eat fruits and vegetables to achieve and **maintain a healthy body weight**. NYC farmers' markets provide an opportunity for residents to buy fresh and affordable fruits and vegetables. The Health Department offers two farmers' market programs – **Health Bucks** and **Stellar Farmers' Markets** – that can help residents get free or reduced priced produce. Call 311 for more information.



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 - COLONOSCOPY CAN PREVENT COLON CANCER. People ages 50 and older should have a colonoscopy every 10 years to get checked for colon cancer and pre-cancerous polyps (growths). For more information about colorectal cancer and where to get checked call 311.