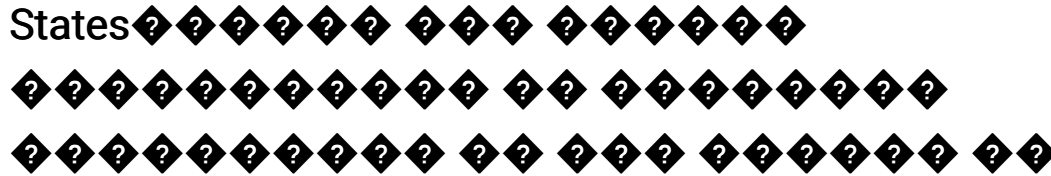


5-2021

Ethnic and Racial Disparities in COVID-19 Infections in the United States



Seraphina Negash
snegash@uri.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/srhonorsprog>

 Part of the [Public Health Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Negash, Seraphina, "Ethnic and Racial Disparities in COVID-19 Infections in the United States" (2021). *Senior Honors Projects*. Paper 915.
<https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/srhonorsprog/915><https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/srhonorsprog/915>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Honors Program at the University of Rhode Island at DigitalCommons@URI. It has been accepted for inclusion in Senior Honors Projects by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@URI. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@etal.uri.edu.

SERAPHINA NEGASH (Health Studies, Cell and Molecular Biology)

Ethnic and Racial Disparities in COVID-19 Infections in the United States

Sponsor: Mary Greaney (Health Studies)

In 2020, the world was changed by the novel COVID-19 pandemic. COVID-19 is caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus and causes severe upper respiratory infections. Patients with co-morbidities such as obesity, chronic lung diseases and diabetes have higher risk of negative outcomes with COVID-19. These conditions are more prevalent in certain populations. Health disparities are differences in health outcomes based on an identity like socioeconomic status, gender or racial/ethnic identity. Research has shown that a person's area code, racial identity, and education level can have tremendous effects on their life-long health. In the context of COVID-19 and its unknown long-term effects, the role of disparities in prevalence and outcomes is especially important to consider. Following PRISMA guidelines, I performed a literature review in order to learn more about the association of racial and ethnic identities to COVID-19 infection rates and outcomes. Using the database PubMed, studies published within the review parameters were identified, and then reviewed based on their relevance to the topic. Keywords included SARS-CoV-2, disparity, socioeconomic, equity, and race. In order to have a national and local view, I looked for articles studying the United States as a whole and also individual states such as New York. Over twenty articles were found, and thirteen articles were used for review. The articles reviewed showed consistent disparities amongst Black, Asian, and Hispanic people in infection, testing availability, and morbidity. Differences in exposure to COVID-19 and testing access affected prevalence amongst different populations. Across the studies, at the adult and pediatric level, non-Hispanic black and Hispanic patients had higher rates of infection. Race was also associated with increased rate of hospitalization and mortality. This review highlights how the COVID-19 pandemic has shone a fresh light on existing health disparities and indicates the space for future work on this topic.