

COVID-19 vaccination hesitancy highest among Hispanic, Black adults in US, study shows

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New research from a New Mexico State University professor shows hesitancy toward the COVID-19 vaccine is much more prevalent among

Hispanic and Black adults in the United States when compared to the overall hesitancy rate for the general American population.

Jagdish Khubchandani, professor of public health sciences at NMSU, analyzed 13 studies conducted in the U.S. that examined [COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy](#) among 107,841 American adults. He focused his research on the data related to Hispanics and African Americans, the two largest minority groups in the U.S.

"Little is known about the extent of COVID-19 vaccination hesitancy in racial and ethnic minorities and whether there are unique sociodemographic and cognitive correlates associated with [vaccine hesitancy](#)," Khubchandani said.

His findings, published in the journal *Brain, Behavior, and Immunity*, show the overall vaccine hesitancy rate was 41.6 percent for African American adults and 30.2 percent for Hispanic adults across the 13 studies. By comparison, the hesitancy rate for all participants in the studies was 26.3 percent.

Khubchandani, who wrote the paper with NMSU graduate student Yilda Macias, said predictors of vaccine hesitancy in African Americans and Hispanics included sociodemographic characteristics such as age, gender, income, education and household size.

Other predictors of vaccine hesitancy included medical mistrust and history of racial discrimination; exposure to myths and misinformation; perceived risk of getting infected with COVID-19; beliefs about vaccines and past vaccine compliance; and concerns about the safety, efficacy and side effects from the COVID-19 vaccines.

The high prevalence of COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy among African Americans and Hispanics is concerning for several reasons,

Khubchandani said.

He noted that the pandemic has disproportionately affected racial and ethnic minorities—populations that have experienced COVID-19-related hospitalizations and deaths in greater numbers. He also pointed out that before the pandemic, [chronic diseases](#) and poorer health outcomes were more prominent among minorities.

"Not getting a COVID-19 vaccine may further increase their risk of morbidity and premature mortality in these populations," he said.

"Minorities also frequently engage in [low-wage](#) and essential work, increasing their exposure to COVID-19. Vaccination should be a priority among these groups."

Another barrier for minority populations is vaccine access, Khubchandani said. Reports he reviewed suggested minority-dominated, socially-deprived communities in the U.S. were not receiving proportionate allocations of COVID-19 vaccines or had lower coverage.

Khubchandani said vaccine hesitancy in minority populations is not a monolithic concept but will require multipronged individual and population-based interventions. The study outlines eight key recommendations based on what Khubchandani calls the "five C's concept." The suggestions include reducing complacency and constraints, increasing confidence and calculations in favor of getting vaccines, and promoting collective responsibility.

"Unless a [proactive approach](#) is adopted, COVID vaccination rates in certain populations will continue to remain lower than what is desirable," he said.

More information: Jagdish Khubchandani et al, COVID-19 vaccination hesitancy in Hispanics and African-Americans: A review

and recommendations for practice, *Brain, Behavior, & Immunity - Health* (2021). [DOI: 10.1016/j.bbih.2021.100277](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bbih.2021.100277)

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