

# In 2010, racial discrepancy in life expectancy 3.8 years

18 July 2013



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(HealthDay)—In 2010, the discrepancy in life expectancy between blacks and whites was 3.8 years, according to a July data brief published by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS).

To examine [racial disparities](#) in [life expectancy](#) in the United States, Kenneth D. Kochanek, and colleagues from the NCHS in Hyattsville, Md., assessed the causes of death among black and white populations in 2010 using data from the mortality file of the National Vital Statistics System.

The researchers found that life expectancy was 3.8 years lower for the black versus the white population in 2010. This was attributed to higher [death rates](#) for heart disease, cancer, homicide, diabetes, and perinatal conditions among blacks. For black versus white males, life expectancy was 4.7 years lower, with the difference mainly due to higher death rates for heart disease, [homicide](#), cancer, stroke, and perinatal conditions. For black versus white females, life expectancy was 3.3 years lower and was attributed to increased [heart disease](#), cancer, diabetes, perinatal conditions, and stroke death rates.

"Life expectancy at birth has increased steadily to a record high 78.7 years in 2010. But differences between the white and black populations still exist, with a gap in life expectancy of 3.8 years," the authors write. "The gap in life expectancy between the white and black populations would have been larger than 3.8 years if not for the lower death rates for the black population for suicide, unintentional injuries, and chronic lower respiratory diseases."

**More information:** [More Information](#)

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APA citation: In 2010, racial discrepancy in life expectancy 3.8 years (2013, July 18) retrieved 6 May 2021 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2013-07-racial-discrepancy-life-years.html>

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