

Quest Diagnostics Health Trends™

COVID-19: Magnifying Racial Disparities in U.S. Healthcare

This Health Trends™ Report explores how Americans of different racial and ethnic backgrounds perceive, trust and access the U.S. healthcare system during the time of COVID-19. It is based on a nationally representative survey conducted by The Harris Poll for Quest Diagnostics.

Key Findings

1. Black and Hispanic/Latinx Americans about 2x as likely as White Americans to say their access to the following is worse than people of other racial or ethnic groups:

	BLACK	HISPANIC/LATINX	WHITE
Advanced COVID-19 therapies or treatments	22%	19%	10%
Diagnostic COVID-19 testing	15%	17%	8%
A COVID-19 vaccine, once available	21%	17%	9%
Quality preventative care during COVID-19	23%	17%	9%
Quality COVID-19 medical care	20%	15%	9%

2. Fewer Black and Hispanic/Latinx Americans trust they would receive equitable life-saving COVID-19 care:

- More than 8 in 10 White Americans (84%) are confident they would receive the same life-saving care as people of other races or ethnicities if they contracted COVID-19, compared to:
 - 67% of Hispanic/Latinx Americans
 - 64% of Black Americans
- Black Americans fear contracting COVID-19 more than a delayed diagnosis for cancer or chronic conditions:
 - 42% are more scared of getting the virus than of a delayed diagnosis for cancer, compared to 33% of White Americans and 32% of Hispanic/Latinx Americans.
 - 42% of Black Americans are more scared of getting the virus than a delayed diagnosis for chronic conditions other than cancer like diabetes, hypertension, and others, on par with 38% of Hispanic/Latinx and 35% of White Americans.

“COVID-19 has increased the moral imperative and urgency to address racial and ethnic disparities in healthcare, including issues of access and bias.”

Harvey W. Kaufman, M.D.
Senior Medical Director,
[Health Trends Research Program](#)
Quest Diagnostics

3. Hispanic/Latinx and Black Americans likely to avoid or delay care, possibly fueling fear of undiagnosed health conditions:

- Most Americans (60%) have skipped or delayed in-person care during the pandemic, especially Hispanic/Latinx (67%), compared to 59% and 58% of White and Black Americans, respectively.
- 1 in 2 White Americans (49%) have been more likely to have seen a doctor for any form of preventative care during the pandemic, as compared to 1 in 3 Hispanic/Latinx (32%) and Black (33%) Americans.
 - Pandemic or not, 15% of Black Americans report never receiving preventative care, compared to just 8% of White Americans.
- 36% of White Americans say they don't plan to resume in-person medical care until the pandemic is under better control compared to:
 - 44% of Hispanic/Latinx Americans
 - 41% of Black Americans
- 39% of White Americans and 42% of Hispanic/Latinx Americans are concerned they currently have an undiagnosed health condition compared to nearly half (49%) of Black Americans.

4. More than 8 in 10 Hispanic/Latinx Americans who believed they needed a COVID-19 test delayed or avoided getting one:

- Of those Americans who have believed they needed a COVID-19 test, 74% chose not to get or delayed getting one.
 - A larger proportion of Hispanic/Latinx Americans (83%) vs. White (72%) and Black Americans (72%) chose to delay or avoid getting a diagnostic COVID-19 test when they believed they needed one.
 - For all Americans who believed they needed a COVID test their primary reason for choosing to delay or not get one was concern about exposure to the virus (30%). Others cited thinking it was very unlikely they had COVID-19 (21%); concerns over having to quarantine while waiting for results or following a positive result (15%); and cost (15%).

5. Black Americans view greater testing access as critical to getting the pandemic under better control:

- Nearly 3 in 4 Black Americans (73%) view greater access to diagnostic COVID-19 testing as absolutely essential or very important to slowing the pandemic.
- Hispanic/Latinx (57%) and White Americans (55%) share that sentiment almost equally, far less strongly than Black Americans.

“By sharing data and insights that demonstrate the depth and breadth of racial disparities, Quest Diagnostics is taking meaningful action to help solve the larger population health crisis that COVID-19 has further exposed.”

Gary A. Puckrein, Ph.D.
President and Chief Executive Officer
[National Minority Quality Forum](#)

6. Americans trust 3 sources most commonly for information about COVID-19, almost equally across racial or ethnic groups in this study:

- Healthcare providers (48%)
 - 49% of Black
 - 49% of White
 - 46% of Hispanic/Latinx
- Public health officials (46%)
 - 48% of Black
 - 46% of White
 - 41% of Hispanic/Latinx
- The government (state, local, or federal) (36%)
 - 39% of Black
 - 37% of White
 - 31% of Hispanic/Latinx

7. All racial and ethnic groups explored in this study trust local or state government for COVID-19 information more than the federal government:

- Just 19% of Black, Hispanic/Latinx and White Americans trust COVID-19 information from the federal government.
- Comparatively, at least 1 in 4 Americans in each racial and ethnic group explored in this study trusts their state or local government for such information:
 - 34% of Black
 - 28% of White
 - 25% of Hispanic/Latinx

Collective Action Needed to Address Disparities

COVID-19 has magnified long-standing inequities in healthcare, particularly among communities of color. Yet, more than half (52%) of Americans think COVID-19 will spur action to address racial disparities in healthcare. [Learn more](#) about how Quest Diagnostics is working to reduce health disparities in underserved communities.

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Methodology: On behalf of Quest Diagnostics, The Harris Poll conducted an online survey of 2,050 adults 18 years and older across the United States from Nov. 10-12, 2020. The survey sample included 337 Hispanic/Latinx, 265 Black and 1,278 White adults. Harris weighted figures for age by sex, region, education, household size, marital status and household income by race/ethnicity where necessary to make them representative of their actual proportions in the population. The Harris Poll is a poll conducted by Harris Insights and Analytics, a market research and global consulting firm.

About Quest Diagnostics Health Trends™

Quest Diagnostics Health Trends™ is a series of scientific reports that provide insights into health topics, based on analysis of objective clinical laboratory data, to empower better patient care, population health management and public health policy. The reports are typically based on the Quest Diagnostics database of 48 billion de-identified laboratory test results, believed to be the largest of its kind in healthcare. Health Trends has yielded novel insights to aid the management of allergies and asthma, prescription drug monitoring, diabetes, Lyme disease, heart disease, influenza and workplace wellness. Quest Diagnostics also produces the [Drug Testing Index \(DTI\)™](#), a series of reports on national workplace drug positivity trends based on the company's employer workplace drug testing data. www.QuestDiagnostics.com/HealthTrends

Quest Diagnostics empowers people to take action to improve health outcomes. Our diagnostic insights reveal new avenues to identify and treat disease, inspire healthy behaviors and improve health care management. www.QuestDiagnostics.com

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