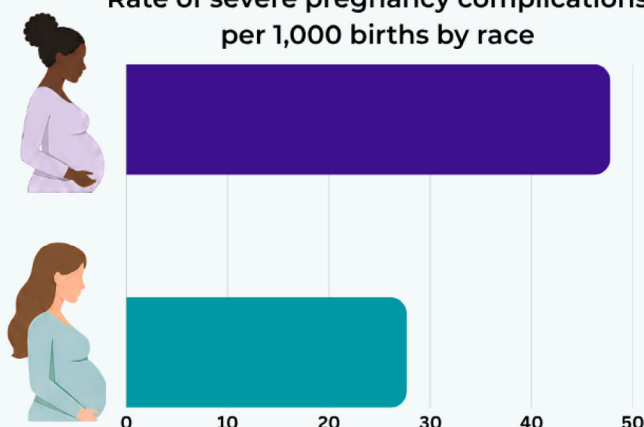


Black-White Disparities in Severe Pregnancy Complications in Canada

MAIN FINDINGS

Rate of severe pregnancy complications per 1,000 births by race



Between 2012 and 2023, Black individuals experienced a **66% higher risk** of severe pregnancy complications than White individuals, after factoring in differences in maternal characteristics (such as age and medical history).

Being Black does not cause severe pregnancy complications.

In this study, we used race as a way to identify people who may experience racism. We compared birth outcomes of Black people with those of White people, since in Canada, White people are the least likely to face racial discrimination.

WHAT TYPES OF SEVERE PREGNANCY COMPLICATIONS ARE MOST COMMON?



Severe high blood pressure
(severe preeclampsia)



Severe bleeding
(severe hemorrhage)



Severe infection
(sepsis)

DOES INCOME OR IMMIGRATION AFFECT THESE FINDINGS?

Maternal income or immigration status did not explain Black-White differences in severe pregnancy complications.

Disparities were found across all levels of maternal income.



Black-White differences were found among immigrants and non-immigrants.



WHAT EQUITY-DRIVEN ACTIONS ARE NEEDED TO ADDRESS RACIAL DISPARITIES IN MATERNAL HEALTH?



Partner with Black communities



Responsible collection and use of race-based health data



Ensure public reporting and accountability



Support equity-focused maternity care



Rajasingham et al. Racial inequities in severe maternal morbidity among Black and White people in Canada: a population-based cohort study, 2012 to 2023. CMAJ 2026;198:E1317-29. doi:10.1503/cmaj.252020.

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