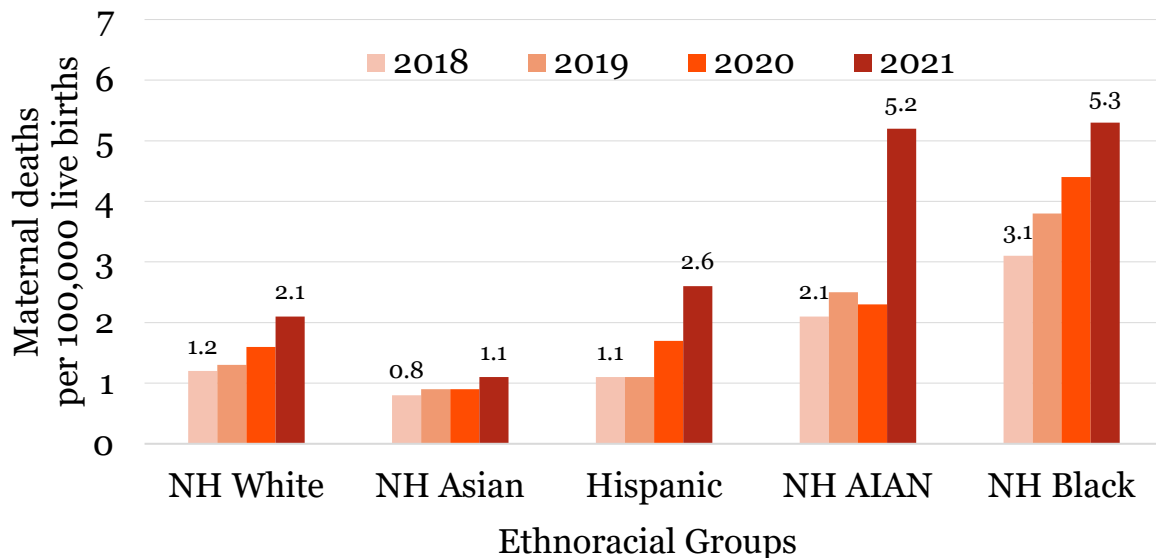


Black Women Have the Highest Maternal Mortality Rate in the United States

Tori-Ann Haywood

The U.S. maternal mortality rate is consistently higher than its high-income peer countries. Since 2018 maternal mortality rates in the U.S. have steadily increased for all ethnoracial groups. The figure below illustrates that, except for non-Hispanic (NH) Asian women, ethnoracial minority women (ages 15-45) have higher maternal death rates than NH White women. In 2018, the maternal mortality rate for NH Black women was 3.1 per 100,000 live births – almost three times higher than that for NH White and Hispanic women. The rate for NH American Indian Alaska Native (AIAN) women was 2.1. By 2021, maternal mortality rates had increased to 5.3 for NH Black women, 5.2 for NH AIAN women, 2.5 for Hispanic women, 2.1 for NH White women, and 1.1 for Asian women. NH AIAN and Black women have high maternal mortality due to unequal access to prenatal and obstetric care and mistreatment during pregnancy and childbirth. High and rising maternal mortality rates are a major U.S. population health crisis. Policymakers and healthcare providers should collaborate to identify strategies to reduce maternal mortality for all groups and close the large and persistent ethnoracial disparities.



U.S. Maternal Mortality Rates (ages 15-45) Increased for all Ethnoracial Groups between 2018 and 2021

Data Source: U.S. National Center for Health Statistics, Mortality 2018-2021 on CDC WONDER Online Database. Rates are age adjusted. Maternal mortality is defined as maternal death while pregnant or within 42 days of the end of the pregnancy. For additional details, visit [CDC Maternal Mortality Reports](#).
Note: NH=non-Hispanic; AIAN=American Indian Alaska Native

About the Author **Tori-Ann Haywood** (tchaywoo@syr.edu) is a PhD student in the Department of Sociology and an Affiliate of the Policy, Place, and Population Health Lab in the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University.