

# STANDARD DEVIATIONS: Who Is Eunice Rivers?

## Part 4

Greetings,

I don't know about you but in my lab every patient looks the same. Every tube of blood is red. Every urine is wet. Every sputum is gross, and every stool grows ... something. We're all equal under the lens of a microscope and within the focus of our science.

Unfortunately, the equality we apply to those samples hasn't yet manifested in the rest of health care. We still see a huge disparity in health care based solely on race.

The great and glaring chasm of this disparity is painfully observed in the health of African Americans.

Racism, oppression and discrimination toward Black people underlies the health care system of the United States. African Americans are less likely to have health coverage, less likely to receive treatments, and less likely to trust the care the health care system. They are more prone to preventable infant mortality, more prone to preventable disorders, and more prone to bias from the health care system.

While overall access to care continually improves over time, African Americans still suffer disproportionately. Here's my evidence (HHS.gov 2016-2018):

### CANCER

- African Americans have the highest mortality rate of any racial and ethnic group for all cancers combined and for most major cancers.
- The death rate from breast cancer for African-American women is 50 percent higher than for white women. African-American women undergo more radical breast cancer surgeries than white women.
- African American men are 60 percent more likely to have liver cancer than white men.
- African American women are 40 percent more likely to die from liver cancer than white women.

### DIABETES

- African Americans are twice as likely to die from diabetes.
- The rate of hospitalization for patients with diabetes is three times higher for African-Americans.
- Nearly 15 percent of African Americans have diabetes compared with 8 percent of whites.
- African American adults are 60 percent more likely than white adults to have been diagnosed with diabetes.
- Blacks are 2.3 times more likely to be hospitalized for lower limb amputations.
- Blacks are 3.5 times more likely to be diagnosed with end stage renal disease.



## ASTHMA

- Blacks are almost three times more likely to die from asthma related causes than the white population.
- African Americans are 40 percent more likely to have asthma.
- Black children were 5 times more likely to be admitted to the hospital for asthma.

## HEART DISEASE

- African Americans are 30 percent more likely to die from heart disease.
- Black patients are 10 percent less likely to be screened for high cholesterol than white Americans, and 25 percent of African Americans have elevated blood pressure compared to 10 percent of white Americans.
- African American women are 60 percent more likely to have high blood pressure, as compared to white women.

## HEPATITIS

- Blacks are 1.5 times as likely to die from viral hepatitis.
- Blacks are almost twice as likely to die from hepatitis C as compared to the white population.
- African Americans were 2.6 times more likely to die from hepatitis B than whites, even though the case rates are nearly identical.

## HIV/AIDS

- African American males have 8.6 times the AIDS rate as white males.
- African American females have 18.6 times the AIDS rate as white females.
- African American men are almost 6 times as likely to die from HIV/AIDS as white men.
- African American women are almost 18 times as likely to die from HIV/AIDS as white women.
- In 2016, African Americans were 8.4 times more likely to be diagnosed with HIV infection, as compared to the white population.

## INFANT MORTALITY

- African American mothers are 2.3 times less likely than white mothers to receive prenatal care.
- African Americans have 2.3 times the infant mortality rate.
- African American infants are 3.8 times as likely to die from complications related to low birthweight.
- African Americans have over twice the sudden infant death syndrome mortality rate.
- Black children have a death rate eight times that of white children.



