Causes of Disparities

Distal
- Population Structure (crowding)
- Access to Clean Water & Sanitation
- Ability to Stay Away from Work
- Psychological Stress
- Nutritional Status
- Access to health providers, insurance

Proximal
- Assortative mixing
- Hand-washing Behavior
- Social Distancing Behavior
- Inflammation & Immune Function
- Vaccination Behavior
- Healthcare utilization (uncontrolled chronic conditions)
- Treatment options offered and availed

Social Position
- Class, Geography, Race
- Policy Context

Differential Exposure
Transmission
Differential Susceptibility & Differential Disease Severity

Unequal levels of illness & death

Differential Consequences after Disease has Developed

COVID and Race Disparities

- **States:**
  - **Illinois:** 43% of deaths AA, 15% of population
  - **Michigan:** 40% of deaths AA, 14% of population
  - **Louisiana:** 70% of deaths AA, 33% of population
    - Data from State Health Departments

https://apnews.com/71d952faad4a2a5d14441534f7230c7c
COVID and Race Disparities

- **Workers:**
  - Food workers
  - Greely, CO, Sioux Falls, SD, & Columbus Junction, IA meat packing plants—Closed indefinitely

“There may be significantly more individuals at the plant who are carrying the virus but may either by asymptomatic, not tested, or afraid to come forward as they are not eligible for sick pay.” - Kim Cordova - President of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 7 Union
Race and Mistrust in Healthcare

- Historical examples:
  - Tuskegee Syphilis Experiment
Race and Mistrust in Healthcare

- Historical examples:
  - Henrietta Lacks
Race and Mistrust in Healthcare

- Historical examples:
  - Katrina
Race and Mistrust in Healthcare

• Mistrust healthcare
  • 45% AAs report mistrust providers vs. 34% of Whites\(^1\)

• Some mistrust in healthcare explained by prior experiences of racism\(^2\)
  • eg: Tuskegee, Jim Crow & Katrina

• Overall only 31% of Americans trust public health officials to be transparent\(^3\)

COVID Exacerbation of Mistrust

- Resource Scarcity
- Unable to visit
- Stressed Providers
- Racial disparities

Mistrust
What Can You Do?

- We can’t fix structural racism and inequity right now

- How to build trust?
  - Communication
    - Compassion
    - Empathy
    - Active listening
    - Spend appropriate time with the patient and family
  - Transparency