

Disparities in **HOMICIDE** Mortality Among Blacks in Arkansas

Health disparities are gaps in health outcomes or determinants between segments of the population. Many health disparities are related to social determinants of health (*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, CDC*).

- **Homicide**, also called murder, is the deliberate and unlawful killing of one person by another. (Miriam-Webster).
- Homicide has been ranked as one of the top five leading causes of death each year for persons aged 1-45 years in Arkansas and the United States (U.S.). (CDC).
- In 2015, Arkansas ranked 12th in the nation for **homicide** mortality (1st being the worst).¹
- In 2015, a total of 217 Arkansans died due to **homicide**, of which 46.1% were Black.
- Lifetime medical and work-loss costs for **homicide** in Arkansas was \$323 million in 2014.²

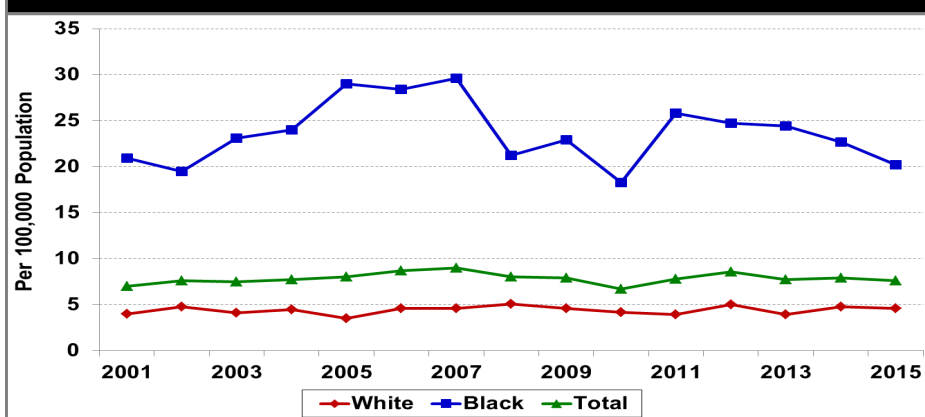
Table 1: Leading Causes of Death by Black/White Disparity Ratio, Arkansas 2011-2015

Cause of Death ³	White Rate ⁴	Black Rate ⁴	Disparity Ratio ⁵	Preventable Deaths among Blacks ⁶
1. HIV	1.2	7.0	5.8	27
2. Homicide	4.4	23.5	5.3	89
3. Diabetes	21.9	51.2	2.3	137
4. Perinatal Conditions	3.4	7.6	2.2	20
5. Hypertension	7.3	15.7	2.2	39
6. Kidney Disease	19.0	36.9	1.9	84
7. Septicemia	14.5	23.9	1.6	44
8. Stroke	46.4	61.9	1.3	73
9. Heart Disease	215.2	261.2	1.2	215
10. Cancer	187.9	212.4	1.1	115

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, CDC WONDER Online

- The 15 Leading Causes of deaths among Blacks were sorted and ranked by disparity ratio. The ten causes with the highest disparity ratio were presented.⁵
- **Homicide** ranked second among the diseases examined.
- The **homicide** age-adjusted mortality rate for Blacks was 23.5 per 100,000 population compared to 4.4 for Whites, 5.3 times higher than that of Whites.⁵
- Preventable Deaths among Blacks showed that 89 Black lives could be saved if the mortality rate for Blacks was equal to the rate for Whites.⁶

Figure 1: Age-Adjusted Homicide Mortality Rates by Race Arkansas 2001-2015

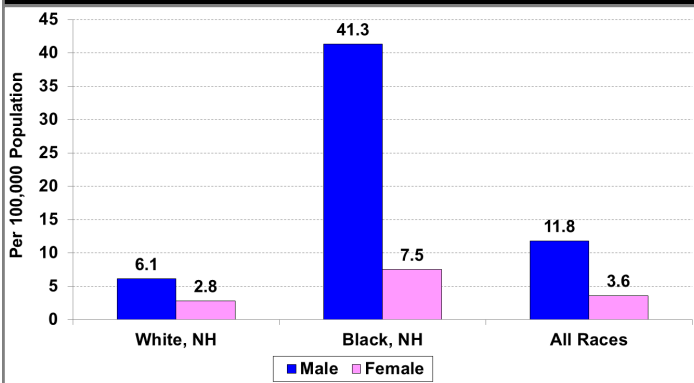


Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, CDC WONDER Online

- During the 2001-2015 time period, **homicide** mortality rates were consistently higher for Blacks as compared to Whites.
- Rates for Whites and the State remained stable during this time period.
- **Homicide** was seven times as common among U.S. non-Hispanic Blacks, compared to non-Hispanic Whites. In Arkansas, **homicide** was five times as common among non-Hispanic Blacks.

¹CDC Wonder. ²MMWR Morb Weekly Rep 2017; 66; No 1. ³Based on the 15 leading causes of death among Blacks. ⁴Age-adjusted mortality rates for Non-Hispanic Whites and Non-Hispanic Blacks. ⁵Disparity ratio calculated by dividing the mortality rate for Blacks by the mortality rate for Whites. ⁶Number of deaths that could have been prevented among Blacks in the absence of Black-to-White disparity.

Figure 2: Age-Adjusted Homicide Mortality Rates by Gender and Race, Arkansas 2011-2015



- The **homicide** mortality rate among Black males was significantly higher compared to their White counterparts.
- Rates were consistently higher among males within all categories. Rate among Black males was almost six times higher, compared to Black females.

NH=Non-Hispanic
Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, CDC WONDER Online

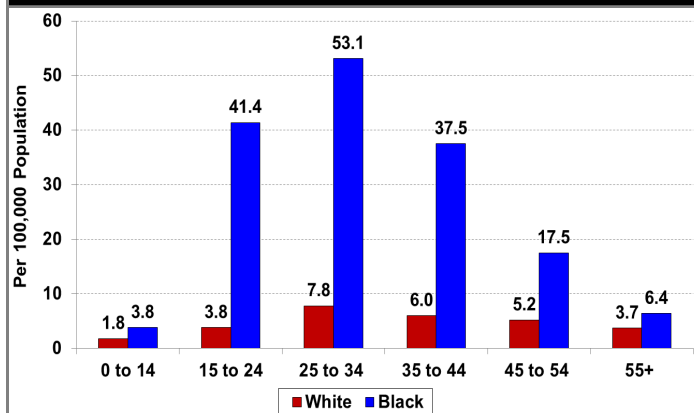
Table 2: Homicide Mortality Rates and Disparity Ratios by Race and County, Arkansas 2011-2015

County	White Rate ⁷	Black Rate ⁷	Disparity Ratio ⁸
1. Union	2.6	25.5	9.7
2. Cross	3.7	35.8	9.6
3. Saint Francis	3.5	27.8	8.0
4. Craighead	2.1	16.6	7.9
5. Crittenden	2.5	19.7	7.8
6. Lonoke	4.4	27.6	6.2
7. Pulaski	5.5	29.3	5.3
8. Mississippi	6.2	31.8	5.1
9. Saline	2.9	13.4	4.5
10. Hempstead	4.2	18.7	4.5

- **Homicide** mortality rates were ranked by disparity ratio. Counties with at least five total deaths and at least four total Black deaths were used in the analysis. Ten counties with the highest disparity ratio among Blacks are highlighted.
- Union County had the highest disparity ratio of 9.7 in **homicide** mortality for the 2011-2015 time period.
- Between 2011-2015, 46 counties had less than 10 **homicide** deaths and another two counties had no **homicide** deaths.

Source: Arkansas Health Statistics Branch Query System

Figure 3: Homicide Mortality Rates by Age and Race, Arkansas 2011-2015



- With the exception of 0-14 year olds, the **homicide** mortality rate among Blacks was significantly higher for all age categories.
- These differences were particularly evident among those 15-44 years of age.
- CDC estimates the total Years of Potential Life Lost (YPLL) before age 65 due to **homicide** to be 6,620 in the year 2015.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, CDC WONDER Online

Table 3: Violent Crime Rate by Race/Ethnicity Arkansas 2015

Race/Ethnicity	Violent Crime ⁹	
	Number	Rate ¹⁰
White	2,688	111.8
Black	2,076	430.8
American Indian	6	18.4
Asian/Pacific Islander	23	38.8
Unknown	46	NA
Total	4,839	162.5

- **Violent Crime** rate among Blacks was about four times higher than their White counterparts and nearly three times higher than the State rate. The rate for Blacks was twenty three times higher, compared to the rate for Asian/Pacific Islanders.

Source: Arkansas Crime Information Center

⁷Age-adjusted mortality rates for Non-Hispanic Whites and Non-Hispanic Blacks. ⁸Disparity ratio calculated by dividing the mortality rate for Blacks by the mortality rate for Whites. ⁹Violent Crime Rate is defined by the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program. ¹⁰Violent Crime Arrests per 100,000 population.