

COVID-19 and the Black Community: A Pathway Forward

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The Gift of Black Theological Education and Black Church
Collaborative



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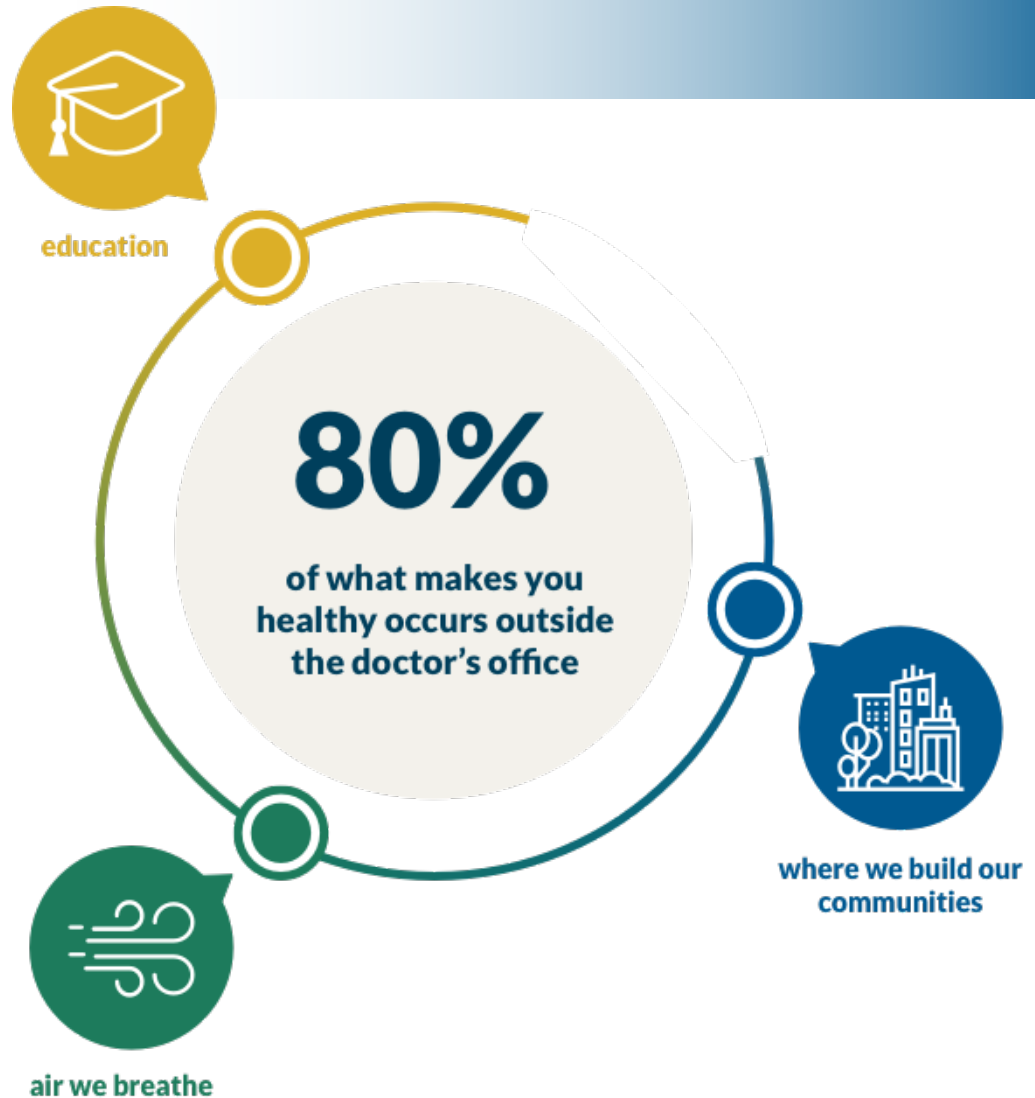
COVID-19: Impact on the Black Community

Immediate action is critical:

- Provide a phone number to your local health department.
<https://www.cdc.gov/publichealthgateway/healthdirectories/healthdepartments.html>
- Record a voicemail on your phone systems, letting people know the availability of vaccines in your area.
- Start a “vaccine alert” system (phone tree, text messages, etc.) to notify individuals of vaccine availability in your area.
- Regularly include vaccine information in your emails and newsletters.
- Provide COVID testing information, in your area.
<https://www.hhs.gov/coronavirus/community-based-testing-sites/index.html>
- Display prevention steps as reminders on websites, email, and social media.
- Share what you know. <https://www.nationalacademies.org/based-on-science>

Today's Discussion

- Impacts on Black Community
- Vaccine Development and Safety
- What we know



Health Disparities

Factors that have contributed to inequities:

- Discrimination
- Healthcare access and utilization
- Occupation
- Educational, income, and wealth gaps
- Housing

Health Disparities

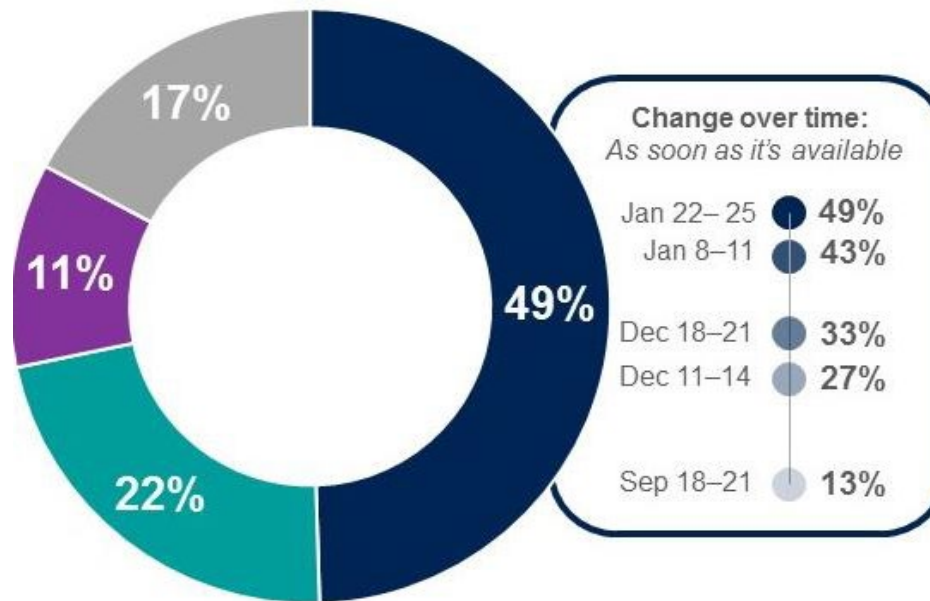
Why are communities of color highly impacted by COVID-19?



Attitudes are shifting

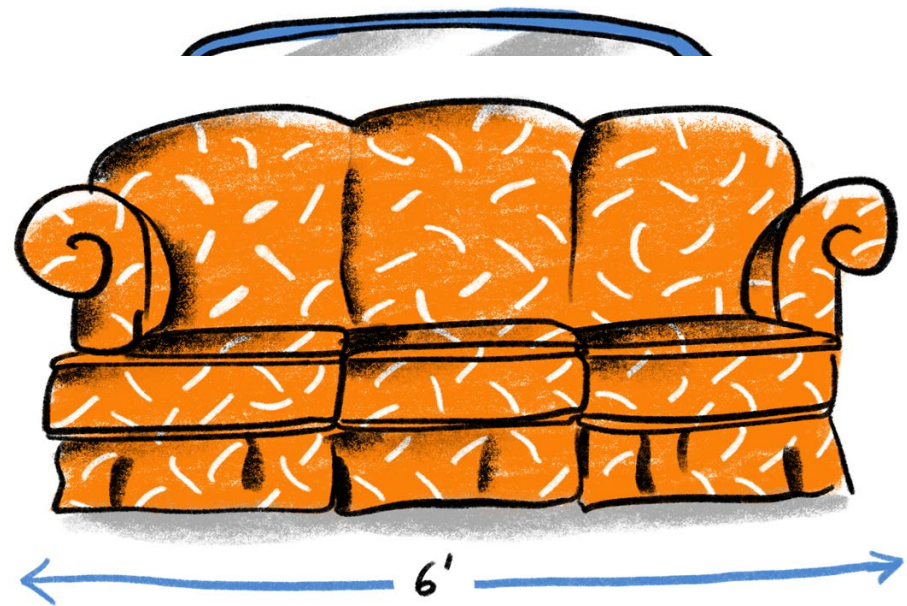
After the COVID-19 vaccine becomes available, when do you plan to get it?

- As soon as it's available
- A few weeks/months after
- A year or more after
- I won't get the vaccine



Prevention Actions

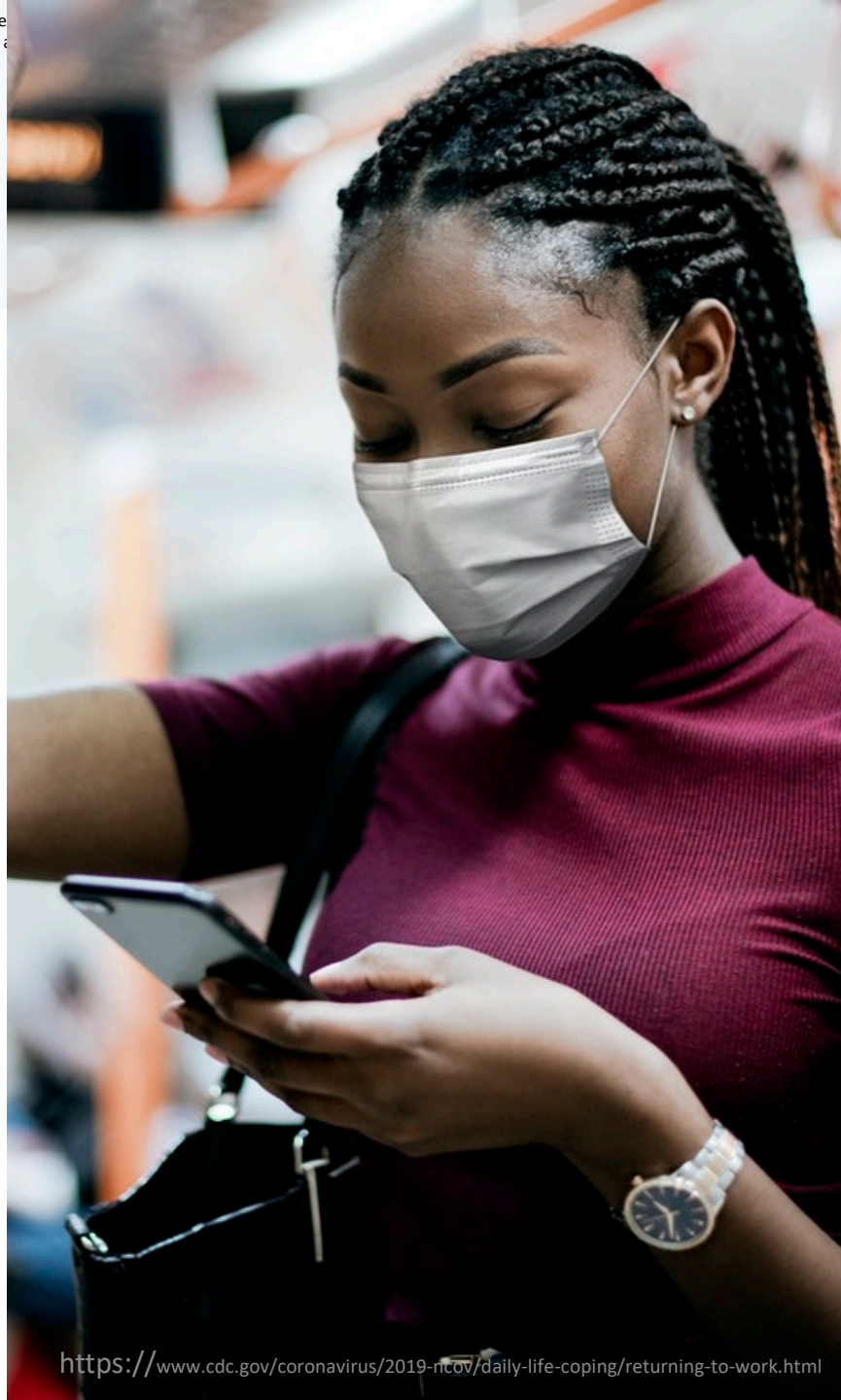
- Wear a mask that covers your nose and mouth to help protect yourself and others.
- Wash your hands, often with soap and water for 20 seconds.
 - Use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol if soap and water are not available.
- Social distance
 - Avoid crowds.
 - Avoid poorly ventilated indoor spaces.



Prevention Actions

But what if I need to go to work?!

- Wear a face mask.
 - Put your keys by your mask, to remember.
- Try to limit length of interaction.
- Look for physical barriers, like plexiglass.



Prevention Actions

But what if I need to go to work?!

- Use reminders -- like signs, arrows on floor, chair arrangements -- to help remind you of prevention actions.
- Carry tissues and hand sanitizer.
- When commuting, wear a mask, try to avoid touching surfaces, social distance, and use hand sanitizer.

Prevention Actions

What if I live in a multi-generational household?!

- Everyone should act as if they, themselves, are at higher risk.
- Choose one or two family members who are not at higher risk to run essential errands.
- Try to use transportation that minimizes close contact with others.
- Wash your hands immediately when returning home.
- Try to avoid hugging, kissing, sharing food or drinks.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/living-in-close-quarters.html>
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/living-in-close-quarters.pdf>

Prevention Actions

What if I live in close quarters and someone is sick?!

- If possible, have one person in the household take care of the person who is sick.
 - People at high risk for severe illness should avoid caring for people who are sick, if at all possible.
 - Identify a different caregiver for other members of the household who require help cleaning, bathing, or other daily tasks.
- If you need to share a bedroom someone who is sick, make sure the room has good air flow.
 - Open a window, turn on a fan, sleep head to toe, put a physical divider between you and the ill person's bed.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/living-in-close-quarters.html>
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Prevention Actions

What if I live in close quarters and someone is sick?!

- If you need to share a bathroom, the person who is sick should clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces.
- Open outside doors and windows before entering the room and use fans to increase air flow.
- Wait as long as possible before entering the room.
- The person that is sick should eat separately from the family.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/living-in-close-quarters.html>
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/downloads/living-in-close-quarters.pdf>



Discussion: How do we take care of each other?

COVID-19 challenges when experiencing health inequity:

- Keeping your loved ones safe
- Applying prevention actions

COVID-19 Vaccine Development and Safety

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Vaccine Hesitancy

Black Americans are still receiving COVID-19 vaccinations at dramatically lower rates than white Americans even as the rollout reaches more people.

mRNA Vaccines

Why are mRNA vaccines so exciting?

- Like every breakthrough, the science behind the mRNA vaccine builds on many previous breakthroughs.
- Already, mRNA vaccines are being tested for use on other diseases, such as flu, Ebola, and Zika.

Clinical Trials

- The genes of Henrietta Lacks, a 30-year-old Black woman from 1951 with cervical cancer, are the source of the HeLa cell line.
- The Pfizer clinical trial enrolled over 36,000 participants.
 - 9.8% of participants were African American.
- Moderna's study enrolled more than 30,000 participants.
 - 9.7% of participants identified as African American.

Black Scientists Involved in the COVID-19 Response

Dr. Kizzmekia Corbett with the NIH Vaccine Research Center, is credited by Dr. Fauci for leading the development of the Moderna vaccine.

Dr. Tomeka Suber is on the front lines as a pulmonologist and is an expert in acute respiratory distress syndrome.

Black Scientists Involved in the COVID-19 Response

Dr. Christopher Barnes is a post-doctoral scholar at the California Institute of Technology (Caltech). He led the team that captured the first-ever images of antibodies, purified from the blood plasma of people who recovered from COVID-19.



Howard University is a clinical trial site for a vaccine being developed by Novavax, a Maryland-based biotechnology company.



Discussion: How do we openly discuss vaccine development and safety?

- Explaining the science to build community trust
- FDA vaccine review and approval process

COVID-19: Addressing Misinformation

Food and supplements cannot prevent you from getting COVID-19.

CLAIM

Eating certain foods or supplements will keep you from catching COVID-19.

FALSE

There are no foods, drinks, or supplements that will protect you from COVID-19.

COVID-19: Addressing Misinformation

Can you catch COVID-19 from food?

CLAIM

COVID-19 is being spread through food.

FINDING

Very unlikely. There are no reports to date of people catching COVID-19 from eating food or handling food packaging.

COVID-19: Addressing Misinformation

How long does coronavirus live on surfaces?

CLAIM

Coronavirus can live on surfaces for days.

FINDING

It depends. The virus can survive from hours to days on different types of surfaces.

COVID-19: Addressing Misinformation

Having antibodies is not the same thing as having immunity to COVID-19.

CLAIM

A positive antibody test can prove that you are immune.

FINDING

UNCERTAIN. Antibodies in your blood show that your body has fought an infection. But having a positive antibody test has not yet been proven to tell you with certainty that you are immune to being infected a second time.

COVID-19: Addressing Misinformation

FACT

It will take time before COVID-19 is behind us.

FACT

Reinfection is possible. Due to severe health risks associated with COVID-19 and the fact that reinfection is possible, you should get vaccinated even if you already had COVID-19.

FALSE

Vaccines will immediately end the COVID-19 pandemic.

FALSE

I had COVID-19, so I don't need to get the vaccine.



Discussion: What is the best way to share what we know?

- Dispel the myths. Communicate the facts.
- Presenting information in the moment

Thank you!

