

Death from COVID-19 very rare for Americans 21 and under, report says

September 15 2020, by Dennis Thompson, Healthday Reporter



(HealthDay)—Only a tiny fraction of children and young adults who

have contracted COVID-19 have died from their infection, a new government report shows.

Just 121 people younger than 21 have died from COVID-19 through the end of July, out of nearly 392,000 confirmed or probable cases, said researchers led by Dr. Danae Bixler from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The deaths of young Americans generally fall along the lines of risk that have applied to all people since the start of the pandemic.

Kids are more likely to die from COVID as they enter young adulthood if they suffer from [chronic health problems](#), and if they are part of a minority group, the results revealed.

"The study illustrates that in the relatively rare instance of death in someone less than 21 years of age, underlying conditions play a major role," said Dr. Amesh Adalja, who reviewed the findings. He's a senior scholar with the Johns Hopkins Center for Health Security in Baltimore. "This fact underscores the need for those with underlying conditions, irrespective of age, to take COVID-19 seriously and to consider these individuals high-risk."

Reports of COVID-19 infection among young people have steadily increased during the pandemic, peaking in July, the last month included in this study.

But COVID-19 deaths tended to hover around 30 per month for young people between May and July, the study showed.

More than 40% of COVID deaths among [young people](#) occurred in those aged 18 to 20, and nearly 20% in teens aged 14 to 17, the report found.

Three out of four kids who died from COVID were suffering from at least one underlying medical condition, the researchers found.

The most common chronic conditions associated with COVID [death](#) were [chronic lung disease](#) (28%), obesity (27%), neurological or developmental disorders (21.5%), cardiovascular disease (18%), cancer (14%) and diabetes (9%).

Hispanic youth were most at risk, representing nearly 45% of all COVID-related deaths among children. Black children represented another 29% of deaths, and whites 14%.

"In light of these new findings, we need to continue to focus on interventions to address such health disparities as the pandemic continues, especially in rural and underserved communities," said Dr. Robert Glatter, an emergency physician at Lenox Hill Hospital in New York City.

"Removing systemic barriers that contribute to such health care disparities is even more important. A focus on providing adequate housing and food to those most at risk can be instrumental in this respect," said Glatter, who wasn't part of the report.

The new study was published Sept. 15 in the CDC's *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

More information: The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more about [COVID-19](#).

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