

# Suicide mortality up for Blacks during closure period of COVID-19

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(HealthDay)—In Maryland, suicide mortality increased among Blacks

and decreased among Whites during the progressive closure period of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a research letter published online Dec. 16 in *JAMA Psychiatry*.

Michael Johnathan Charles Bray, from the Johns Hopkins School of Medicine in Baltimore, and colleagues examined trends in [mortality](#) among Black residents of Maryland during the COVID-19 pandemic. Periods of interest were period 1 (Jan. 1 to March 4, 2020 [pre-COVID-19]); period 2 (March 5 to May 7, 2020 [progressive closure]); and period 3 (May 8 to July 7, 2020 [progressive reopening]). In 2020, daily suicide mortality was stratified by race/ethnicity and compared to mean values from 2017 to 2019 for these periods. Data were included for 1,079 suicide decedents from 2017 to 2020.

The researchers found that the mean suicide mortality increased among Black residents during period 2 (0.344 per day in 2020 versus 0.177 per day in 2017 to 2019) and decreased among White residents (0.672 per day in 2020 versus 1.224 per day in 2017 to 2019). Suicide mortality did not differ from historical values among Black residents during period 3 (0.230 versus 0.290 per day in 2020 versus 2017 to 2019) but decreased among Whites (0.787 versus 1.126 per day in 2020 versus 2017 to 2019).

"To our [knowledge](#), this study is the first to characterize [suicide](#) trends by race/ethnicity during COVID-19, highlighting the importance of timely identification of high-risk groups," the authors write. "Black individuals are disproportionately impacted by COVID-19."

**More information:** [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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