

Black children less likely to receive diagnostic imaging during emergency department visits

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Black children consistently are less likely to receive diagnostic imaging

than white children presenting to a pediatric emergency department, according to a study published online June 2 in *JAMA Network Open*.

Margaret E. Samuels-Kalow, M.D., from Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, and colleagues examined the association between the diversity of the pediatric population seen at each [pediatric emergency department](#) and variation in [diagnostic imaging](#) practices. The analysis included more than 12.3 million visits to 38 children's hospitals (2016 through 2019).

The researchers report that 28.7 percent of visits involved at least one diagnostic imaging test. Differences in frequency of diagnostic imaging were seen across 1.5 million visits, with imaging performed in 34.2 percent of visits for non-Hispanic White children, in 24.6 percent of visits for non-Hispanic Black children, and in 26.1 percent of visits for Hispanic children. At each hospital and for all imaging modalities, non-Hispanic Black patients were consistently less likely to receive diagnostic imaging than non-Hispanic White patients. Greater imaging differences between non-Hispanic White and Black patients significantly correlated with the proportion of patients from minoritized groups cared for at the hospital.

"These findings suggest the need for interventions at the hospital level to improve equity in imaging in pediatric emergency medicine," the authors write.

One author disclosed financial ties to the health and wellness industry.

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

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