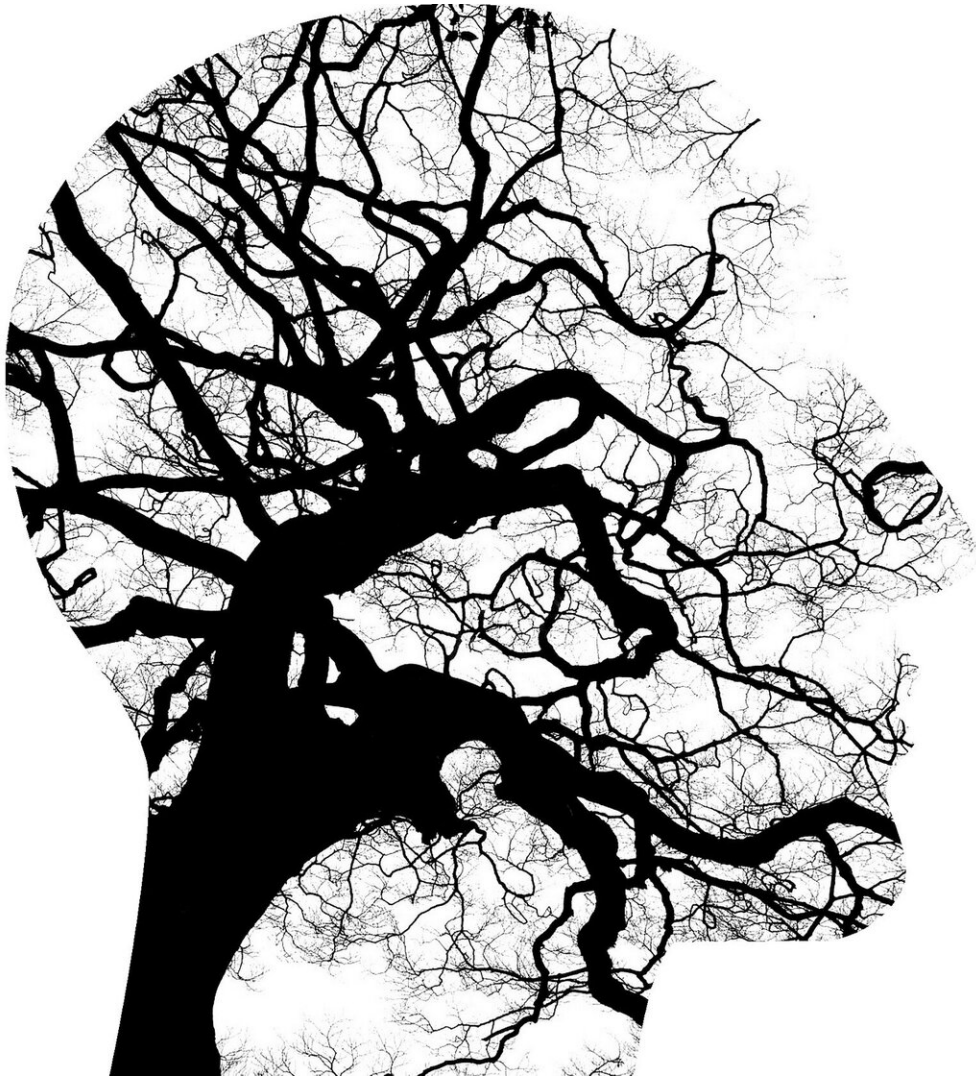


# The role of behavioral medicine in addressing climate change-related health inequities

August 1 2022, by Alex Smith

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An article published in *Translational Behavioral Medicine* explores the role of behavioral medicine in addressing climate change-related health inequities.

"Structural racism has led to longstanding health inequities for [communities](#) that have been subjected to marginalization. Climate change is exacerbating these longstanding health inequities for frontline communities—which are those communities that are hit first and worst by climate change," said Kristi White, PHD, LP, ABPP, an assistant professor and clinical health psychologist at the University of Minnesota Medical School. "We as behavioral medicine professionals have an important role to play in addressing climate-related health inequities in our research, clinical and other professional practices."

The article highlights six strategies with the greatest potential for addressing climate-related health inequities:

- Adopt standards for the measurement and reporting of race as a sociopolitical construct in all behavioral medicine research and practices, including those directed at addressing climate change.
- Operationalize the concept of structural racism in all behavioral medicine research and practices, including those directed at addressing climate change.
- Incorporate [environmental justice](#) efforts into behavioral medicine research and practices.
- Center the voices of communities targeted for marginalization in all behavioral medicine [research](#) and practices, including those that address climate and environmental justice.
- Prioritize policy action on climate change and health equity.
- Identify effective communication strategies to foster action on climate change and health equity issues.

Researchers say future studies should be aimed at dismantling structural

racism, incorporating environmental justice efforts, and identifying effective communication [strategies](#) that promote action on [climate change](#) and health equity.

**More information:** Leticia Nogueira et al, The Role of Behavioral Medicine in Addressing Climate Change-Related Health Inequities, *Translational Behavioral Medicine* (2022). DOI: [10.1093/tbm/ibac005](https://doi.org/10.1093/tbm/ibac005)

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