

# Health Disparities & Individuals with Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities

## What is a health disparity?

Health disparities are unfair differences in the level of health, health care, and health outcomes that occur among certain groups of people based on social, racial, ethnic, economic, or environmental factors. Compared to the general population, these groups of people face barriers which result in more negative health outcomes and make it difficult to achieve optimal health

## Who is affected?

Individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) are frequently disadvantaged through societal barriers that include stigma and discrimination.

Other populations considered as health disparity groups by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) include:

- Racial and ethnic minorities
- People of lower socioeconomic status (SES)
- Underserved rural communities
- Sexual and gender minorities

## What are the consequences?

Individuals with I/DD experience a number of factors contributing to poorer overall health and a shorter lifespan, including:

- Lower rates of preventive screening
- Limited access to providers and quality healthcare services
- Higher rates of obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease
- Co-occurring mental health conditions
- Pregnancy complications

These conditions indicate health inequities, which are differences in length of life; quality of life; rates of disease, disability, and death; severity of disease; and access to treatment.

Health equity is achieved when everyone has the opportunity to be as healthy as possible.



## MORE INFORMATION:

- [NIH Overview of Health Disparities](#)
- [Announcement of People with Disabilities as a Health Disparity Population](#)
- [Health Equity for People with Disabilities](#)



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