

Black patients less happy with care after knee, hip replacement

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Recovering from [hip or knee replacement surgery](#) can be tough for

anyone, but a new study from one hospital showed that Black patients were less likely than white patients to be satisfied with their care after the procedure.

Researchers reviewed survey responses from more than 2,500 people who underwent [hip replacement](#) and more than 2,100 people who had knee replacement at the Hospital for Special Surgery (HSS) in New York City between July 2010 and February 2012.

"Our aim was to determine whether overall patient assessment scores differed by race or [socioeconomic status](#)," said senior investigator Dr. Susan Goodman, a rheumatologist at HSS.

In both groups, Black patients were more likely than whites to say they were "not completely satisfied" with their care after surgery, but there was no difference between Black and [white patients](#) in satisfaction with the outcome of their surgery.

A patient's primary health insurance coverage was not associated with satisfaction in any of the patient groups, according to the study, presented Tuesday at the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons annual meeting, in Chicago. Such research is considered preliminary until published in a peer-reviewed journal.

"The study is important because we know that Black patients generally wait longer to seek treatment, presenting with worse [pain](#) and function prior to surgery, and we are trying to sort out the barriers to seeking [timely care](#)," said study co-author Dr. Mark Figgie, chief emeritus of HSS' Surgical Arthritis Service.

"Patient outcome measures indicate that although Black patients achieve significant improvement after surgery, it does not reach the same level as those who seek timely treatment," Figgie noted in an HSS news release.

"Confidence in the health care system may contribute to the delay in seeking care, and this is something we need to address," he added.

"More research is needed to investigate other factors, such as perceived staff courtesy and baseline pain and function, to understand why [disparities](#) exist so we can achieve a high level of patient satisfaction for everyone," Goodman said in the release.

More information: There's more on joint replacement surgery at the [U.S. National Institutes of Health](#).

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