

Black and Hispanic female survivors of trauma experience greatest functional limitations post-injury

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Survivors of traumatic injury often face many long-term health consequences, including physical disabilities, mental illness and issues with social integration. A research team from Brigham and Women's Hospital, a founding member of the Mass General Brigham health care system, has investigated the intersection of race, ethnicity, and sex and the post-injury functional limitations of those affected by trauma. Their study appears in the *Journal of the American College of Surgeons*.

More than 4,000 patients with moderate to severe injuries were assessed six to 12 months post-injury. For the purpose of the study, the term "[new functional limitations](#)" was coined and defined as limitations in one's ability to perform one or more of six daily activities, including walking up stairs, walking on flat surfaces, showering, eating, going to the bathroom and cooking, as a result of the injury. The researchers found that Black and Hispanic women are most likely to experience functional limitations, and that women and Black or Hispanic patients are most likely to have new functional limitations after six to 12 months.

"More than half of the racial and sex-related disparities in post-injury functional limitations among Black or Hispanic females are related to the unique experience of being both a minority and female, and the relationships that are established with their environment, social networks, and the health care system," said Juan Herrera-Escobar, MD, MPH, of the Brigham's Center for Surgery and Public Health. "Future research should focus on identifying modifiable intermediate factors contributing to this intersectional disparity so that programs can be developed to improve post-injury outcomes for Black and Hispanic women."

More information: Claudia P Orlas et al, Intersection of Race, Ethnicity, and Sex in New Functional Limitations after Injury: Black and Hispanic Female Survivors at Greater Risk, *Journal of the American College of Surgeons* (2022). [DOI: 10.1097/XCS.0000000000000428](https://doi.org/10.1097/XCS.0000000000000428)

Provided by Brigham and Women's Hospital

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