

ATLANTA, GA

BREAST CANCER'S DEADLY DIVIDE

Racial Disparity in Mortality Rate Pervasive in Atlanta

According to a new in-depth report from Susan G. Komen, the breast cancer mortality rate for Black Women is higher than that of white women in nearly every county in the Atlanta metro area. While Black women are more likely to get screened, they're also more likely to die due to such barriers as economic insecurity, lack of adequate insurance and poor access to high-quality care.

Focus group participants stated they experienced delays in both screening and diagnoses that were likely responsible for the area's high late-stage diagnosis rates—from hours-long wait times to physically evident tumors that went undiagnosed after multiple attempts. Black women described the financial strains of treatment and a severe lack of compassion at the hands of their health care providers.

“You should not have to wait four and five hours to be screened.
But because I get Medicaid and go to a free clinic, they take their time.”
- Undiagnosed

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The legacy of segregation continues to drive disparities in breast cancer care and outcomes.
- Transportation to high-quality care is a significant barrier.
- Counties and neighborhoods of Black communities are more likely to be low income, uninsured and face food insecurity.
- Black women are screened more than white women, but still die more often due to barriers to high-quality care.
- Participants felt the screening process could be done with more care and compassion.
- Community members emphasized the importance of having access to financial and caretaking assistance.

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