

SANKOFA FACT SHEET

February 2007

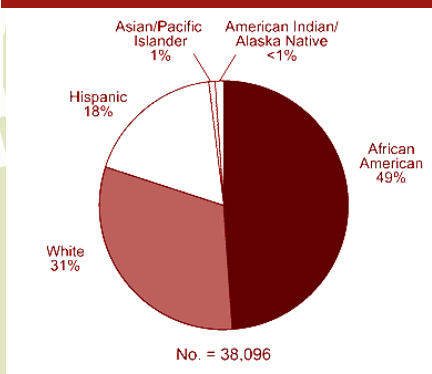
No. 12

HIV/AIDS and African Americans

Of all racial and ethnic groups in the United States, HIV and AIDS have hit African-Americans the hardest. The reasons are not directly related to race or ethnicity, but rather to some of the barriers faced by many African-Americans. These barriers can include poverty (being poor), sexually transmitted diseases and stigma (negative attitudes, beliefs, and actions directed at a people living with HIV/AIDS or directed at people who do things that might put them at risk for HIV).

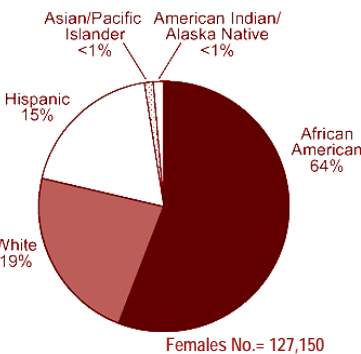
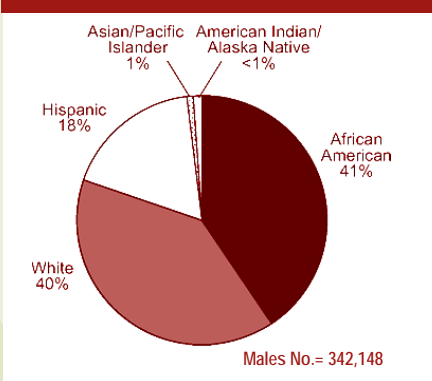
When we look at HIV/AIDS by race and ethnicity, we see that African-Americans have:

- **More illness.** Even though African-Americans account for about 13 percent of the U. S. population, they account for about half (49 percent of the people who get HIV and AIDS).
- **Shorter survival times.** African-Americans with AIDS often don't live as long as people of other races and ethnic groups with AIDS. This is due to the barriers mentioned above.
- **More deaths.** For African-Americans, HIV/AIDS is a leading cause of death.



As the pie chart shows, in 2005, about half (49 percent) of the people diagnosed with HIV/AIDS were African-American according to information from 33 states). Children are included in these data.

The reality is similar for children: HIV/AIDS affects African-American children the most. In 2005, 104 (63 percent) of the 166 children under the age of 13 in 33 states diagnosed with HIV/AIDS were African-American.



As the pie charts show, African-Americans account for about half of all people living with HIV/AIDS within each sex category. According to information from 33 states, during 2005,

- among men, 41 percent of men living with HIV/AIDS were in African-Americans
- among women, 64 percent of women living with HIV/AIDS were African-American

For African-American men, the most common ways of getting HIV are (in order): 1. having unprotected sex with another man who has HIV; 2. sharing injection drug works (like needles or syringes) with someone who has HIV; 3. having unprotected sex with a woman who has HIV. For African-American women, the most common ways of getting HIV are (in order): 1. having unprotected sex; 2. sharing injection drug works (like needles or syringes) with someone who has HIV. African-Americans at higher risk for HIV are those who are unaware of their partner's risk factors, with other STDs (which affect more African-Americans than any other racial or ethnic group), who live in poverty (which is about one quarter [25 percent] of all African-Americans).

Source: <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/topics/aa/index.htm>

