

# Uncovering the hidden pandemics

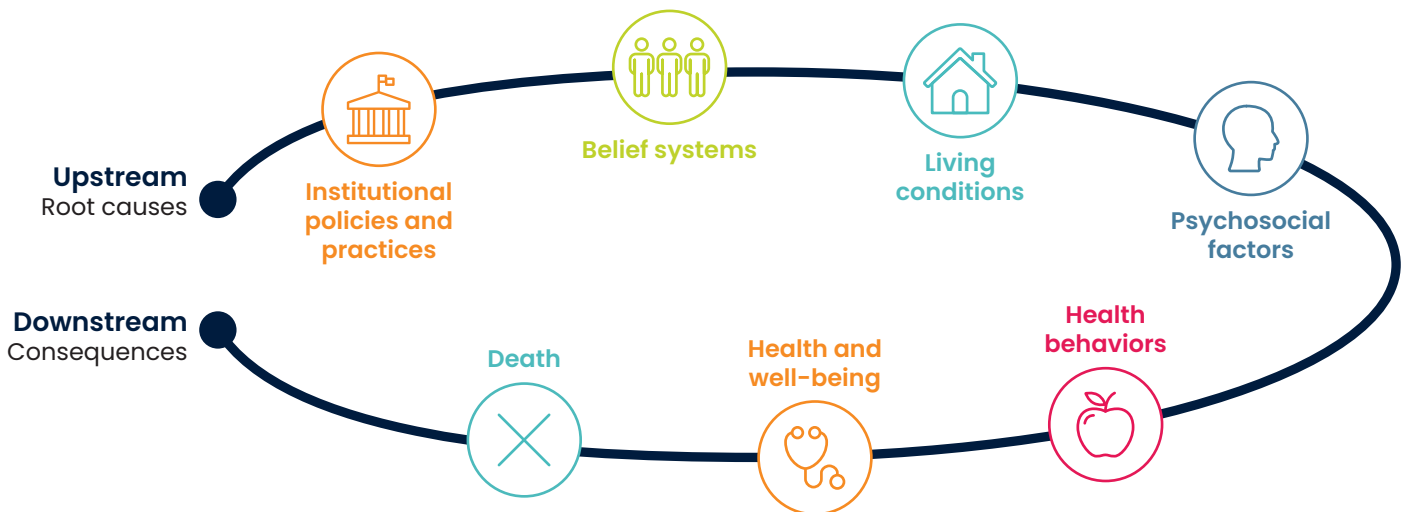
Addressing significant health issues disproportionately affecting communities of color and vulnerable populations.

## Introduction

Social determinants of health disproportionately impact communities of color—a truth that has become even more evident during the COVID-19 pandemic. Racial and ethnic disparities impact risk of exposure and access to care that result in disproportionately higher incidence of infection, complications, and death.

## Understanding the root causes

Decades of research on social determinants and inequalities for Black persons support that factors other than biology may play a greater role in determining one's health.<sup>1,2</sup> Conditions such as heart disease, hypertension, and diabetes are more common in communities of color due to lack of access to healthcare which have serious downstream consequences.



## Primary impact of COVID-19

Rates of COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations, and deaths are higher for Black, Hispanic or Latino persons compared to White, non-Hispanic persons.<sup>3</sup>



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## Secondary impact of COVID-19

The secondary effects of the COVID-19 pandemic are, in some ways, equally as devastating as the virus itself—and they are disproportionately impacting people of color.



## Learning from the past

Parallels between the HIV and COVID-19 epidemics are striking, in both cases, a lack of access to reliable testing and quality healthcare may be contributing to the spread of disease, particularly in underserved populations.

### HIV in Black persons

1 in 7 

An estimated 1 in 7 people who are infected with HIV don't know they have it; thus they are unable to benefit from treatment and also may be transmitting the virus to others.<sup>4</sup>

### COVID-19 transmission

1 in 5 

Studies estimate 20% of patients with COVID-19 remain asymptomatic and may be transmitting the virus to others.<sup>5</sup>

## Take ACTION

To build long-term solutions that address social determinants of health, it is critical to raise awareness, provide education and comprehensive testing resources that allow individuals to know their health status—not just during the pandemic, but beyond. Be the champion in your community by telling others about the value of proactive testing. With education, we can quickly reach the levels of testing needed to help minimize the health and economic impact of the pandemic in every community.

To learn more about ACT Against Covid by visiting [ACTAgainstCovid.com](https://actagainstcovid.com).

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3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). COVID-19 hospitalization and death by race/ethnicity. Updated August 18, 2020. Accessed October 23, 2020. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-data/investigations-discovery/hospitalization-death-by-race-ethnicity.html>
4. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). HIV and African American People. Updated May 18, 2020. Accessed October 23, 2020. <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/group/raciaethnic/africanamericans/index.html>
5. Garcia DB, Gany DE, Counotte M, et al. Occurrence and transmission potential of asymptomatic and presymptomatic SARS-CoV-2 infections: a living systematic review and meta-analysis. *PLOS Medicine*. September 2020. doi: doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1003346