

New Research Highlights Widening Racial Disparities in Sudden Infant Deaths

[Health Equity](#)

10.23.26

A recent [study](#) published in *JAMA Network Open* examining federal birth and mortality records found that sudden unexpected infant death (SUID) rates have increased among Black infants since 2020 while remaining relatively stable for White infants, reflecting a growing racial disparity. Although preterm births continue to account for a significant share of the overall mortality gap between the two groups, researchers emphasized that the recent surge in SUID is driving an acute public health crisis that persists independently of preterm birth rates. While the exact causes remain under investigation, experts suggest that pandemic-era factors, overlapping respiratory illness surges, and widened health care barriers all may have contributed to the troubling upward trend.