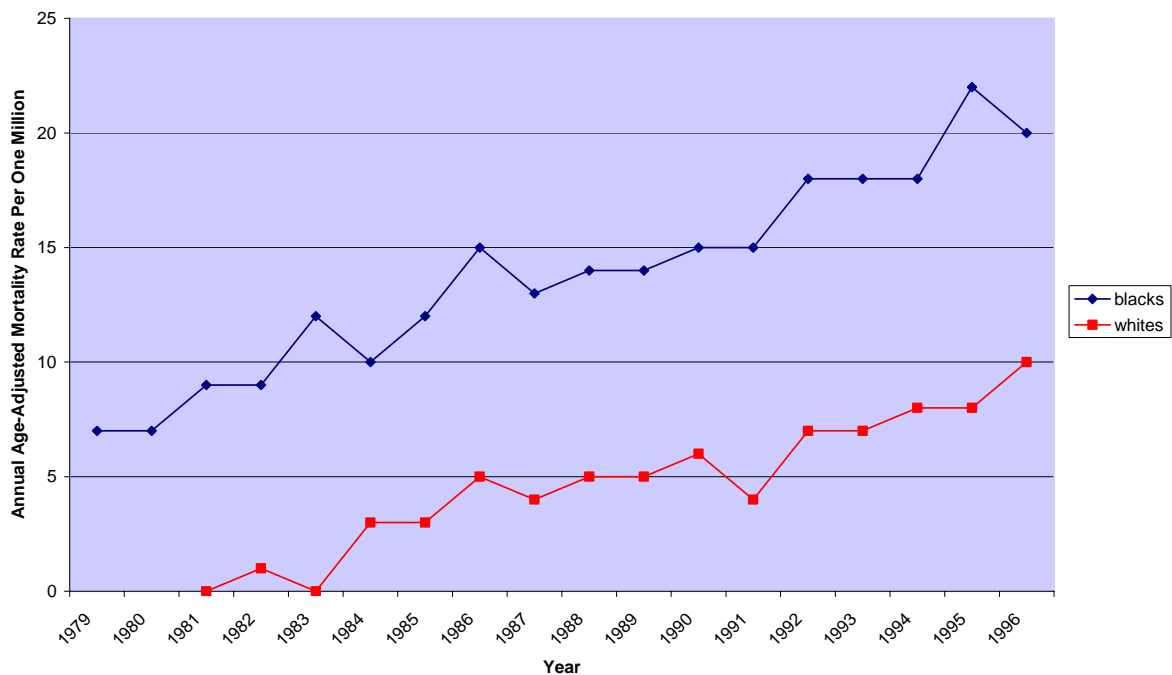


# People of African Descent and Pulmonary Hypertension

## General

- According to many PH patients, it takes an average of *two to three* doctors' visits to get an accurate diagnosis for PH.
- Due to health care disparities between races, people of African descent may have lower health insurance benefits and lack adequate access to care and costly treatments, thus reducing their likelihood of receiving proper diagnosis and treatment.
- Past research indicates a greater percentage of blacks than whites died of PH, yet a smaller percentage of blacks than whites were being treated for PH implying a *lack of awareness and treatment* for blacks regarding PH.<sup>1</sup>
- Much of the statistical evidence on PH among people of African descent is based on death rates, indicating a *lack of diagnosis* while there is still a chance to save lives.
- Sickle cell anemia affects millions of people around the world, primarily those of African descent. New research suggests that about *20 to 40 percent* of sickle cell patients have moderate to severe PH, signifying a strong possibility of the prevalence of PH in the black community.<sup>2</sup>

Annual Age-Adjusted PPH Mortality Per One Million Population in the United States from 1979-1996



<sup>1</sup> Lilienfeld, David E, Rubin, Lewis J, et al. Mortality from Primary Pulmonary Hypertension in the United States, 1979-1996. *Chest* 2000; 117:796-800.

<sup>2</sup> Gladwin, Mark T, et al. Pulmonary Hypertension as a Risk Factor for Death in Patients with Sickle Cell Disease. *New England Journal of Medicine* 2004; 350:886-895.