



Brief:

Disasters and displacement worsens inequities in maternal and newborn health

Disasters can lead to exposure to environmental pollutants, psychological stressors, and lack of healthcare access while also interacting with other social drivers of health.

Evidence shows that long-standing structural racism has led to increased vulnerability of lower income and racially and ethnically marginalized individuals to exposures to climate-related disasters.

MATERNAL & INFANT HEALTH

- Hurricanes, earthquakes, wildfires, and floods are associated with a range of pregnancy health implications including preterm birth, low birthweight, still birth, small for gestational age.

INTERGENERATIONAL IMPACTS

- Maternal exposure to disasters during pregnancy predisposes infants to chronic health conditions later in life, including obesity, allergies, and neurodevelopmental impairments.
- Prenatal maternal stress from disasters increases childhood risk for worse cognitive, motor, socio-emotional, and behavioral outcomes.

Native Americans are 6X more likely than other populations to live in wildfire-prone areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Include disaster planning for maternity services, resources, and transport for maternal-infant dyad.
- Support community-rooted organizations that serve pregnant and birthing people and their infants by providing disaster-related education and resources.
- Join us: [IgnitingImpactTogether.org](https://www.IgnitingImpactTogether.org)