

Racial bias in pulse oximetry measurement.

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Sjoding MW, Dickson RP, Iwashyna TJ, et al. Racial bias in pulse oximetry measurement. N Engl J Med. 2020;383(25):2477-2478. doi:10.1056/nejmc2029240.

<https://psnet.ahrq.gov/issue/racial-bias-pulse-oximetry-measurement>

Pulse oximetry is used to triage patients, initiate or adjust oxygen administration, and, more recently, as a way to [remotely](#) monitor COVID-19 patients at home. However, a [study](#) in the Johns Hopkins Health System showed that Asian, Black, or Hispanic patients are more likely to experience inaccurate readings, potentially resulting in missed or delayed [diagnosis](#) of respiratory diseases. This study used paired oxygen saturation by pulse oximetry and arterial oxygen saturation in arterial blood gas in Black and white patients before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. Consistent with the Johns Hopkins study, Black patients had three times the frequency of occult hypoxia than white patients.