Heart Disease and Mental Health Among Black Women

- Stressful life events — such as the death of a spouse or other family members, divorce, abuse, job loss or financial problems — are linked to higher incidents of heart attack, stroke and other types of cardiovascular disease in Black women.¹

- Disparities in mental health are due to structural racism and conditions in which people are born and live called social determinants of health. ii

- Women are at least twice as likely to experience an episode of major depression as men, iii and few African Americans receive any form of depression treatment. iv

- Rates of mental health among Black people in the U.S. are similar to other groups. But significant disparities among Black people exist in mental health services. v

Barriers to quality care include:

- Stigma associated with mental illness
- Distrust of the health care sector
- Lack of providers from diverse backgrounds
- Lack of insurance, underinsurance vii

Only 1 in 3 Black people in America who need mental health services receives it. vi

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¹Mental Health: Culture, Race, and Ethnicity - NCBI Bookshelf (nih.gov)
³Products - Data Briefs - Number 303 - February 2018 (cdc.gov)
⁴Prevalence and distribution of major depressive disorder in African Americans, Caribbean blacks, and non-Hispanic whites: results from the National Survey of American Life - PubMed (nih.gov)
⁶Mental Health: Culture, Race, and Ethnicity - NCBI Bookshelf (nih.gov)
⁷Mental Health: Culture, Race, and Ethnicity - NCBI Bookshelf (nih.gov)