Title: Associations between Perceptions of Racism, Blood Pressure, and Self-Reported Health.

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There are emerging data linking racism to greater cardiovascular disease and all-cause mortality among African Americans. However, while the linkage of interpersonal racism to cardiovascular disease is steadily being established, far less attention has been paid to the potential health impact of structural racism. Scholars have noted the difficulty of capturing experiences and perceptions of structural racism through survey methodology (Gee and Ford, 2011), but strongly advocate for future research to address this significant knowledge gap. To begin to address the gap, we examined the associations between perceptions of structural racism, resting blood pressure, and self-reported health.

Method: Sixty-two African American adults (mean 25 years, 52% female) completed the Institutional subscale of the Color-blind Racial Attitudes Scale (CoBRAS) and the Short Form (SF-36) designed to assess self-reported health. Resting blood pressure was recorded for 10 minutes. In linear regression analyses controlling for age, sex, and BMI, results revealed that perception of structural racism was inversely related to self-reported (β=.12, p <.05) but not related to SBP (β=.07, p >.05). This study provides preliminary evidence that perceptions of structural racism are related to self-reported health, and may be a potential pathway through which racism is experienced as a stressor.