In 2021, the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) reported that 6.7% of Black adults over the age of 18 experienced a major depressive episode in the past 12 months.

Many Black Americans experience microaggressions, a term that describes the many small, subtle, often unconscious slights and insults that can have "macro" effects as they accumulate over time.

Researchers have found that posttraumatic stress symptoms (PTSS) may occur among individuals who experience repeated acts or even a single act of racism.

PTSS associated with microaggressions can lead to depressive symptoms.

NSDUH explains that a major depressive episode is classified as a period of at least two weeks with depressed mood, loss of interest or pleasure in daily activities, and other specified symptoms.

Microaggressions may induce levels on physical or emotional trauma that have lasting adverse effects on physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.

In 2021, 21% of Black adults experienced mental illnesses or serious mental illnesses, which includes any mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder within a 12-month period.

Understanding the impact of racial trauma on Black adults can improve retention in behavioral health care.

Depression and Racial Trauma in the African American Community


