

# Minority Kids Less Likely to Receive Proper Pain Meds in ER

Black and Hispanic children don't receive the same care for fracture pain as their white counterparts.

April 23, 2020 By [Alicia Green](#)

---

A new study published in the journal *Pediatrics* on pain management among children reveals that Black and Hispanic kids are more likely than white youngsters suffering from long-bone fractures not to receive opioids and to be sent home in significant pain upon being discharged from emergency department (emergency room, or ER) care, reports [Children's National Hospital](#).

Long-bone fractures are defined as a fracture of the clavicle, humerus, ulna, radius, femur, tibia or fibula.

Researchers reviewed the emergency department's management of pain among kids under age 18 with long-bone fractures and discovered inequalities in both process and outcomes based on race and ethnicity.

For example, although minority children were more likely to receive analgesics, such as ibuprofen and acetaminophen, and achieve greater than a two-point reduction in pain, they were also less likely to receive opioids to treat their fracture pain and optimal pain reduction. By contrast, white children with similar injury severity and pain scores received opioids and were sent home experiencing considerably less pain.

"At the end of the day, we don't want children to be in pain from their injuries. We asked, 'Are these differences in the types of pain medications we are using affecting how well a child's pain is managed?'" said Monika Goyal, MD, MSCE, associate division chief of emergency medicine at Children's National Hospital and the study's lead author.

"We understood that if we hadn't dug deeper into the research, the disparities in care would not have been uncovered," Goyal observed.

For related coverage, read "[Study Finds Racial Disparities in Culturally Competent Cancer Care](#)" and "[Minority Infants More Likely to Receive Poor Care in NICUs.](#)"

---

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.

<http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/article/minority-kids-less-likely-receive-proper-pain-meds-er>