Microaggression and Health
Microaggressions

are the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, which communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership.

## Marginalized Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marginalized Group</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Race &amp; Ethnicity</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sexual Orientation</td>
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<td>Sexual Identity</td>
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<td>Physical and Mental Ability</td>
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<td>Religion</td>
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</tbody>
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*Sue DW et al., 2007*
Types of Microaggression

- Microinvalidations
- Microinsults
- Microassaults

Sue DW et al., 2007
Examples

A patient of color expresses concern in discussing racial issues and his physician replies “When I see you, I don’t see color” (microinvalidation)

A female patient asked if she has a husband or boyfriend before inquiring about sexual identity or orientation (microinsult)

A White male patient refuses care from a female physician in the emergency room because she is Asian American (microassault)
Various Themes in Microaggression

- Intellectually inferior
- Second class citizens
- Assumption of Criminality
- Quality of Speech
- Assumptions of Similarity
- Eroticization of Women

*Sue DW et al., 2007*
Effects of Microaggression on Marginalized Groups

Dynamics of Microaggression

1. Bias & Stereotypes
2. Microaggressions
3. Perceptions of Discrimination
4. Psychosocial Stress
Perceived Racial Discrimination & Health Outcomes

- Increased Cardiovascular Disease Risk
- More preterm and low birth weight deliveries
- Increased Odds of Current Smoking
- Poor Self Report of Health
- Greater chance of foregoing preventive services, postponing medical tests and treatment
- More likely to underutilize health services
- Report worse physician-patient communication
- Lower satisfaction with care