



# Empower

HIV  
Prevention  
Resources for  
Black Women  
to Thrive

HealthHIV



HOWARD  
UNIVERSITY

# Introduction



Higher rates of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), lower rates of testing, and higher rates of stigma continue to make Black women vulnerable to poorer health outcomes, including the acquisition of HIV or STIs. For many multi-layered reasons, educational and engagement opportunities and health data for and by Black women are limited.

HealthHIV, a premier national HIV nonprofit organization, and Howard University, a champion of Black women, have collaborated to conduct research, provide education, spark community engagement, and embrace the arts to create a path to empowerment. Our innovative project improves the availability of data and develops creative health and wellbeing programming.

From September 2024 through October 2024, a community survey was conducted among self-identified Black/African American females to identify gaps in healthcare access, usability, and confidence in care. The findings from this survey informed the development of programmatic deliverables, including learning opportunities and engagement initiatives designed to improve healthcare experiences for

Black women and the providers who serve them. Representation came from 34 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. One of the overwhelming themes that emerged was the need for a comprehensive resource guide to support Black women in navigating and accessing available healthcare services.

As a direct response to the insights gathered from the survey, we developed a comprehensive resource guide designed to bridge the gaps in healthcare access for Black women. This guide serves as a vital tool, equipping individuals with the knowledge and support needed to navigate medical systems with confidence. It includes curated information on culturally competent healthcare providers, patient rights, financial assistance programs, and community-based services that address barriers to care. By increasing awareness of available resources and strengthening connections to essential services, the guide empowers Black women to advocate for their health while also providing care providers with strategies to foster more inclusive and responsive healthcare environments.



# Key Findings



## Limited Healthcare Engagement Highlights Opportunities to Expand Access

Participants shared valuable insights, highlighting the importance of respectful, inclusive, and culturally competent care to improve patient-provider relationships. This suggests a potential for increasing diverse care options in communities, emphasizing the importance of creating a supportive environment to enhance communication and build trust between patients and providers.



## Mental Health Struggles Indicate a Need for Targeted Support

Improving mental health resources is essential, as many women reported significant stress and a need for more accessible support. While 64% of respondents rated their mental health as excellent or good, addressing the disconnect between self-perception and stress levels can lead to better awareness and more effective mental health care. Resources such as therapy services, support groups, and mental health organizations provide vital support for those seeking guidance.



## Insufficient Community Resources Limit Support for Black Women

Strengthening support for Black women is essential. As the need for more resources and community engagement opportunities increases, it highlights the importance of building tailored support networks that address their unique health needs. However, resources need not be limited to traditional medical care. Holistic care is vital to Black women thriving in a complex society and it is essential for those who serve Black women to have a deep understanding of the cultural context, historical richness, and complexity that Black women embody. This understanding is fundamental to delivering truly comprehensive and culturally sensitive care.



## Discrimination Erodes Trust and Communication in Healthcare

Experiences of bias and fear of judgment create barriers to open communication and trust between patients and providers.

# Black Women's Healthcare Experiences

Findings highlighted critical gaps in provider trust, as many respondents expressed feeling minimized and judged during care interactions, with a strong desire for more respectful and supportive care. This underscores the importance of fostering culturally competent care and promoting inclusivity in patient-provider relationships.

In the last 12 months...



**39%**

reported experiencing available appointments conflicting with their schedule



**9%**

reported having no providers a reasonable distance from them



**19%**

reported not being able to take time off work to see a provider or seek care

Addressing these concerns can significantly enhance healthcare access and outcomes for diverse communities. To explore these findings further and learn how to foster better communication and trust in healthcare settings, we invite you to check out our webinar where we provide a deeper dive into these critical topics. You can access the webinar through the link provided at the end of this document.



## Resources from Washington, DC Organizations

The following chart offers additional resources specific to the DC area categorized by available services.

DC ORGANIZATION	HOUSING	NUTRITION/ FOOD	TRANSGENDER SUPPORT	HEALTHCARE ACCESS/ SERVICES	INSURANCE NAVIGATION	BEHAVIORAL HEALTH	FINANCIAL SUPPORT	EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES	COMMUNITY SUPPORT GROUPS	STI, HIV, AND HCV TESTING	SAFER SEX SUPPLIES	MOBILE OUTREACH	DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES	CASE MGMT/ SOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES	REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH
<b>Black Nurses Rock DMV Chapter</b> A professional and mentoring organization that empowers Black nurses by promoting leadership, education, and community health initiatives. They focus on reducing healthcare disparities in underserved communities. (202) 431-3873   <a href="https://blacknursesrockdmv.com">https://blacknursesrockdmv.com</a>								✓	✓						
<b>The George Washington University School of Medicine and Health Sciences</b> A renowned academic institution providing education, research, and healthcare services. They run the GW Healing Clinic, which offers free primary care and health education to underserved populations. (202) 994-0202   <a href="https://smhs.gwu.edu">https://smhs.gwu.edu</a>				✓		✓		✓		✓	✓				
<b>Whitman-Walker Health</b> A nonprofit healthcare provider specializing in LGBTQ+ and HIV care. They offer primary care, behavioral health services, transgender support, STI/HIV testing, legal assistance, and more. (202) 745-7000   <a href="https://www.whitman-walker.org">https://www.whitman-walker.org</a>			✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
<b>Community and Family Life Services, Inc.</b> A faith-based organization offering transitional housing, health services, behavioral health care, employment support, and case management for women and families transitioning out of homelessness or incarceration. (202) 347-0511   <a href="https://www.cflsdc.org">https://www.cflsdc.org</a>	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	
<b>Momma's Safe Haven</b> A grassroots nonprofit promoting self-love, education, and self-employment. They provide mentorship, educational resources, community support groups, and outreach to underserved communities in D.C. (202) 315-9095   <a href="https://www.mommasafehaven.org">https://www.mommasafehaven.org</a>								✓	✓					✓	
<b>Hepatitis B Initiative of Washington DC (HBI)</b> A nonprofit organization focused on preventing liver diseases by providing free hepatitis B and C testing, vaccinations, health education, and case management, particularly for underserved populations. (202) 220-8583   <a href="https://hbi-dc.org">https://hbi-dc.org</a>				✓	✓			✓		✓		✓		✓	
<b>Mamatoto Village</b> A maternal health organization supporting Black mothers and families through pregnancy, postpartum care, breastfeeding support, and community-based education, promoting health equity in D.C. (202) 248-3434   <a href="https://www.mamatotovillage.org">https://www.mamatotovillage.org</a>				✓		✓		✓	✓					✓	✓

DC ORGANIZATION	HOUSING	NUTRITION/ FOOD	TRANSGENDER SUPPORT	HEALTHCARE ACCESS/ SERVICES	INSURANCE NAVIGATION	BEHAVIORAL HEALTH	FINANCIAL SUPPORT	EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES	COMMUNITY SUPPORT GROUPS	STI, HIV, AND HCV TESTING	SAFER SEX SUPPLIES	MOBILE OUTREACH	DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SERVICES	CASE MGMT/ SOCIAL SUPPORT SERVICES	REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH
<b>Advocates for Youth</b> A nonprofit empowering young people to lead initiatives on sexual and reproductive health, LGBTQ+ rights, and HIV prevention through education, advocacy, and community programs. (202) 419-3420   <a href="https://www.advocatesforyouth.org">https://www.advocatesforyouth.org</a>			✓					✓	✓					✓	✓
<b>Building Bridges Foundation</b> Focused on personal and community development, they provide behavioral health support, educational workshops, and mentoring to individuals seeking growth and stability. (301) 937-2556   <a href="http://buildingbridges4u.org">http://buildingbridges4u.org</a>						✓		✓	✓					✓	
<b>Community Education Group</b> A nonprofit dedicated to eliminating health disparities in underserved communities through health education, HIV prevention, testing, mobile outreach, and community engagement. (202) 543-2376   <a href="https://communityeducationgroup.org">https://communityeducationgroup.org</a>				✓					✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
<b>Latin American Youth Center</b> A multicultural organization providing youth and families with education, workforce development, health services, housing, and community support, emphasizing culturally tailored programs. (202) 319-2225   <a href="https://www.layc-dc.org">https://www.layc-dc.org</a>	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓				✓	✓
<b>Community Concierge Care, LLC (C3 Cares)</b> A healthcare service provider offering personalized care coordination, health education, and community-based support for vulnerable populations in D.C. (202) 888-6440   <a href="https://www.c3cares.com">https://www.c3cares.com</a>				✓				✓	✓					✓	
<b>Damien Ministries, Inc.</b> A faith-based organization supporting individuals living with HIV/AIDS through health education, housing assistance, nutritional support, case management, and community services. (202) 526-3020   <a href="https://damienministries.org">https://damienministries.org</a>				✓		✓		✓	✓	✓				✓	
<b>Her Promise, Inc.</b> A nonprofit focused on empowering women by providing case management, educational resources, and support services for survivors of domestic violence or those in crisis. (240) 557-9887								✓	✓					✓	
<b>National Minority AIDS Council</b> A national organization working to end HIV in communities of color by providing advocacy, capacity-building assistance, health equity training, and community engagement programs. (202) 744-6517   <a href="https://www.nmac.org">https://www.nmac.org</a>				✓				✓	✓	✓				✓	
<b>Us Helping Us/People Into Living, Inc.</b> A community-based nonprofit providing culturally relevant health services for Black LGBTQ+ individuals, including HIV care, mental health support, and sexual health education. (202) 446-1100   <a href="https://www.ushelpingus.org">https://www.ushelpingus.org</a>			✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓

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<b>Sex.U.ology</b> A program dedicated to promoting sexual health and wellness education, focusing on LGBTQ+ and marginalized communities, offering workshops, resources, and community support. (202) 277-5872			✓					✓	✓						✓
<b>Howard University Hospital</b> A leading teaching hospital providing comprehensive medical services, including primary care, specialty care, behavioral health, reproductive health, and community outreach programs. (202) 806-0006   <a href="https://www.huhealthcare.com">https://www.huhealthcare.com</a>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<b>Howard University College of Pharmacy</b> A top pharmacy school committed to improving healthcare access and outcomes through education, research, and community programs, especially in underserved populations. (202) 806-6530   <a href="https://pharmacy.howard.edu">https://pharmacy.howard.edu</a>				✓	✓			✓	✓					✓	
<b>The Womens Collective</b> A nonprofit organization focused on the health and wellbeing of women, particularly those living with or affected by HIV. They provide case management, health education, and peer support. (202) 468-7979   <a href="https://www.womenscollective.org">https://www.womenscollective.org</a>			✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
<b>Innergy, Inc.</b> A wellness organization offering behavioral health services, mentoring, and educational resources to foster personal growth and emotional well-being. (202) 400-9197						✓		✓	✓					✓	
<b>Voices for a Second Chance</b> A nonprofit supporting incarcerated individuals and their families through case management, reentry services, and advocacy for social justice. (202) 544-2131   <a href="https://www.vscdc.org">https://www.vscdc.org</a>	✓					✓		✓	✓					✓	
<b>Leadership Council for Healthy Communities</b> A coalition of faith-based organizations addressing health disparities through education, advocacy, and health services tailored to underserved communities. (202) 248-5083   <a href="https://lchcnetwork.org">https://lchcnetwork.org</a>		✓		✓				✓	✓						
<b>The Black Women's Wellness Agency, Inc.</b> A nonprofit advocating for health equity for Black women, offering wellness education, community resources, and advocacy programs to address systemic health disparities. (202) 599-5331   <a href="https://www.thebwwa.com">https://www.thebwwa.com</a>								✓	✓						
<b>Planned Parenthood of Metropolitan Washington, DC, Inc.</b> A trusted provider of reproductive and sexual health services, including contraception, STI testing, cancer screenings, and education, with a focus on accessibility and inclusivity. (800) 230-7526   <a href="https://www.plannedparenthood.org">https://www.plannedparenthood.org</a>			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

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## Resources from National Organizations

The following are nationally available resources that address some of the needs identified in the survey.

### Therapy and Mental Health Support Organizations

These organizations specialize in providing mental health services with a culturally competent and affirming approach.

- ▶ **The Loveland Foundation**  
[lovelandfoundation.org](http://lovelandfoundation.org)  
Provides free or low-cost therapy sessions for Black women and girls.
- ▶ **Therapy for Black Girls**  
[therapyforblackgirls.com](http://therapyforblackgirls.com)  
Directory of Black female therapists, plus a podcast on mental wellness.
- ▶ **Black Female Therapists (BFT)**  
[blackfemaletherapists.com](http://blackfemaletherapists.com)  
Therapist directory, community events, and wellness resources .
- ▶ **BEAM (Black Emotional and Mental Health Collective)**  
[beam.community](http://beam.community)  
Focuses on peer support, mental health training, and healing justice.
- ▶ **HealHaus**  
[healhaus.com](http://healhaus.com)  
Offers therapy, wellness workshops, yoga, and meditation designed for communities of color.

### Nutrition and Exercise for Stress Management

Black women’s mental health is closely tied to nutrition and movement. These platforms provide culturally affirming wellness advice.

- ▶ **Black Girl in Om**  
[blackgirlinom.com](http://blackgirlinom.com)  
Promotes holistic wellness for Black women through meditation, movement, and affirmation practices.
- ▶ **Trill Yoga – Claire Fountain**  
[trillyoga.com](http://trillyoga.com)  
Yoga designed for mental and physical healing, led by a Black woman expert.
- ▶ **Afro Flow Yoga**  
[afroflowyoga.com](http://afroflowyoga.com)  
Combines yoga, meditation, and African dance for mental and physical well-being.

### Alternative Healing and Holistic Wellness

Non-traditional approaches to mental health and stress relief, including spiritual and energy-based healing.

- ▶ **The Nap Ministry**  
[napministry.com](http://napministry.com)  
Advocates for rest as a form of resistance and healing for Black women.
- ▶ **Sacred Woman by Queen Afua**  
[queenafua.com](http://queenafua.com)  
Holistic healing focusing on spiritual wellness, nutrition, and womb care.
- ▶ **Oya Sound Healing**  
[oyasound.com](http://oyasound.com)  
Uses sound therapy to help with stress, trauma, and emotional balance.



## Podcasts and Digital Support Spaces

These podcasts and online platforms center Black women's mental health, self-care, and empowerment.

▶ **Girlfriends Podcast**

[healthhiv.org/empower](https://healthhiv.org/empower)

A podcast dedicated to addressing the unshakable strength shown, and the unique health challenges faced by, Black women and girls, particularly in the context of HIV prevention.

▶ **Rooted in Wellness**

[effibarryinstitute.org/podcast/rooted-in-wellness](https://effibarryinstitute.org/podcast/rooted-in-wellness)

A podcast mini-series exploring holistic approaches to health and well-being.

▶ **Balanced Black Girl**

[balancedblackgirl.com](https://balancedblackgirl.com)

Focuses on self-care, fitness, and nutrition for Black women.

▶ **Hey, Girl Podcast by Alex Elle**

[alexelle.com](https://alexelle.com)

A soothing podcast on mindfulness, self-love, and healing.

## Community and Support Networks

Online and in-person spaces where Black women can connect for mental and emotional support.

▶ **Sista Afya Community Mental Wellness**

[sistaafya.com](https://sistaafya.com)

Offers affordable therapy and healing circles for Black women.

▶ **Ethel's Club**

[ethelsclub.com](https://ethelsclub.com)

A social club for Black creatives that promotes mental wellness.

▶ **GirlTrek**

[girltrek.org](https://girltrek.org)

A national movement that encourages Black women to walk as a healing practice.

## Black Medical Professional Directories

These resources focus on connecting with Black medical professionals across specialties.

▶ **Black Doctors USA**

[blackdoctorsusa.com](https://blackdoctorsusa.com)

National directory and outreach platform for Black doctors and health professionals.

▶ **Find a Black Doctor**

[findablackdoctor.com](https://findablackdoctor.com)

Black health professional directory, healthcare literacy resources.

▶ **Association of Black Women Physicians**

[blackwomenphysicians.org](https://blackwomenphysicians.org)

Network of Black women physicians dedicated to health equity and community support.

▶ **Black Faculty and Staff Association: MedStar Georgetown University Hospital**

[www.medstarhealth.org/locations/medstar-georgetown-university-hospital/black-faculty-and-staff-association](https://www.medstarhealth.org/locations/medstar-georgetown-university-hospital/black-faculty-and-staff-association)

Support organization for Black medical professionals.

## HIV Prevention and Empowerment Resources

These resources offer essential tools, support, and education on HIV prevention for individuals and communities.

▶ **Empower Project Resources**

[healthhiv.org/empower](https://healthhiv.org/empower)

▶ **Empower Women's Workgroup**

[www.whocanyoutell.org/workgroups/](https://www.whocanyoutell.org/workgroups/)

▶ **Trustworthiness Toolkit (AAMC Health Justice)**

[www.aamchealthjustice.org/our-work/trustworthiness/trustworthiness-toolkit](https://www.aamchealthjustice.org/our-work/trustworthiness/trustworthiness-toolkit)

## PrEP Awareness and Stigma

These social media posts feature a celebrity sharing their story on PrEP awareness and breaking stigma, inspiring change and encouraging open conversations.

- ▶ **Tamar Braxton's PrEP Announcement (Instagram)**  
[www.instagram.com/tamarbraxton/reel/DHZrPtOSKRX/](https://www.instagram.com/tamarbraxton/reel/DHZrPtOSKRX/)
- ▶ **Facebook Video of PrEP Awareness**  
[www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1370968810580679](https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1370968810580679)

## Medical Racism and Health Equity

These educational resources explore the impact of medical racism on health equity, empowering individuals and communities to advocate for fair and inclusive healthcare.

- ▶ **History of Racial Bias in Pulse Oximeters**  
[publichealth.jhu.edu/2024/pulse-oximeters-racial-bias](https://publichealth.jhu.edu/2024/pulse-oximeters-racial-bias)
- ▶ **Medical Exploitation of Black Women**  
[eji.org/news/history-racial-injustice-medical-exploitation-of-black-women/](https://eji.org/news/history-racial-injustice-medical-exploitation-of-black-women/)
- ▶ **Henrietta Lacks Case (PubMed Article)**  
[pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/18204272/](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/18204272/)

## Gender Identity and LGBTQ+ Resources

These educational resources offer essential information and support on gender identity and LGBTQ+ issues, promoting understanding, inclusivity, and empowerment.

- ▶ **Gender Unicorn (Gender Identity Education)**  
[transstudent.org/gender/](https://transstudent.org/gender/)
- ▶ **LGBTQ+ Terminology Guide**  
[lgbtqia.wiki/wiki/Gender](https://lgbtqia.wiki/wiki/Gender)
- ▶ **The ABCs of LGBT+ (Book)**  
[www.goodreads.com/book/show/28783749-the-abc-s-of-lgbt](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/28783749-the-abc-s-of-lgbt)

## Cultural Perspectives on Gender and Identity

These resources highlight cultures that acknowledge and embrace a diverse range of gender identities, fostering greater understanding and acceptance.

- ▶ **Cultures Recognizing More than Two Genders (Britannica)**  
[www.britannica.com/list/6-cultures-that-recognize-more-than-two-genders](https://www.britannica.com/list/6-cultures-that-recognize-more-than-two-genders)
- ▶ **Gender Colonialism and Non-Western Identities**  
[www.newsweek.com/stop-imposing-western-lgbtq-identities-non-western-cultures-its-gender-colonialism-opinion-1705785](https://www.newsweek.com/stop-imposing-western-lgbtq-identities-non-western-cultures-its-gender-colonialism-opinion-1705785)

## Government Policies and Restricted Language

These resources serve as a reference to the 2025 government policies and restricted language as of April 1, 2025.

- ▶ **List of Words Banned by the Federal Government**  
[pen.org/banned-words-list/](https://pen.org/banned-words-list/)



## Empowered Voices: HIV Prevention Resources for Black Women to Thrive

An informative webinar providing key findings and insights from a Community Survey conducted in 2024; a discussion of the intersecting factors that affect Black women's access to healthcare, support, and education; and resource sharing aimed at reducing disparities and advancing health equity for Black women in the fight against HIV.



ACCESS THIS WEBINAR AT  
<https://ehealthhiv.org/course/view.php?id=575>

# Empower

The health of Black women is deeply impacted by systemic inequalities like poverty and limited access to quality care. Our project aims to provide resources, improve data availability, and develop health programming to empower Black women.

HealthHIV, a premier national HIV nonprofit organization, and Howard University, a champion of Black women, are collaborating to conduct research, provide education, spark community engagement, and embrace the arts to create a path to empowerment. Our innovative project will improve the availability of data and develop creative health and wellbeing programming.

Empower offers a series of resources designed to inform, support, and uplift Black women and girls, providing them with the tools to advocate for their health and wellness. Through expert insights, engaging discussions, and community-driven storytelling, these initiatives directly address health challenges and promote empowerment.



LEARN MORE AT  
[HealthHIV.org/empower](https://HealthHIV.org/empower)

**HealthHIV**  
HealthHIV.org

HealthHIV is a national non-profit working with healthcare organizations, communities, and providers to improve HIV, HCV, STI, and LGBTQ healthcare and advance harm reduction and health equity through education and training, technical assistance and capacity building, advocacy, communications, and health services research and evaluation.