

# Assets and Issues of Native Americans and their Providers: Connecting Similarities with Aboriginal and Other Indigenous Peoples

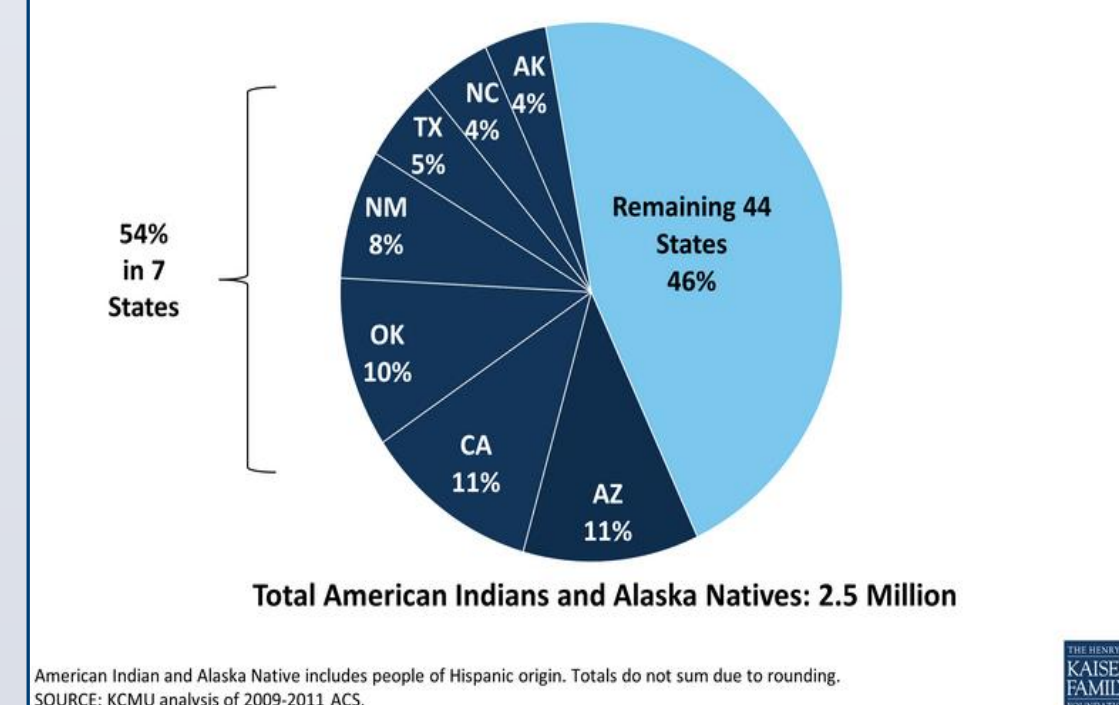
## Native American Demographics

In the U.S. 5.2 million people identify as American Indian or Alaska Native, alone or in combination with one or more other races. The combination population increased by 39% since 2000. The total Native population makes up 1.6% of the total U.S. population at 5.1 million.

There are 567 federally recognized tribes with 318 reservations—more than half this population lives off the reservations.

Number of states with more than 100,000 American Indian and Alaska Natives as of the 2011 American Community Survey: California, Oklahoma, Arizona, Texas, New Mexico, Washington, North Carolina, New York, Florida, Michigan, Alaska, Colorado, Oregon, and Minnesota.  
PIO@census.gov

### Distribution of American Indians and Alaska Natives Across States, 2009-2011



<https://images.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search?p=Native+American+and+Alaska+Native+images>

### Disease patterns among American Indians and Alaska Natives strongly associated with:

Adverse consequences of poverty  
Disparities in access to health care services  
Cultural dislocation and cultural differences  
Inadequate education  
High rates of unemployment  
Discrimination  
Environmental factors, i.e. uranium mines—contaminating water supply  
Unhealthy lifestyles

\*Compared with all other Americans, Indians experience disproportionately high mortality from alcoholism, tuberculosis, diabetes, injuries, suicide, and homicide.

## Changing Health Points:

- Significant increase in end-stage renal disease (ESRD). National survey incident rate 3 times higher among Native American than among whites and 6 times higher in those with diabetes.
- Prevalence rate for diabetes among Native Americans 11% for men and 13% for women, more than twice the rates for the total U.S. population.
- Dramatic decline in mortality for two infectious diseases: tuberculosis and gastroenteritis.

Jonson, D.T. and Taylor, A. (1991).

Table 3.1. Leading causes of death and mortality rates by sex, 2006-2009.

Cause	Mortality Rate	
	Male	Female
Unintentional Injury	193.1	53.0
Diabetes	62.6	28.2
Suicide	31.4	5.3
Alcohol Dependence Syndrome	23.9	6.3
Assault	21.1	4.4
Hypertensive disease	15.8	5.9
Chronic Obstruction Pulmonary Disease	13.1	5.3

Navajo Population Profile 2010 U.S. Census. (2013). -Navajo Epidemiology.  
[www.nec.navajo-nsn.gov/Portals/0/Reports/NN2010PopulationProfile.pdf](http://www.nec.navajo-nsn.gov/Portals/0/Reports/NN2010PopulationProfile.pdf)

## Unique advantages of working on a Native American Reservation

- Warmth and acceptance by Native Americans
- Beauty of the landscape
- Communion with nature
- Travel & professional developments
- Exposure to heritage of our first Americans
- Special opportunity to learn and serve

## Aboriginal and Other Indigenous Peoples

“Indigenous peoples” is a term used to refer to the original inhabitants of a given region. There are approximately 370 million Indigenous Peoples worldwide, in over 90 countries.

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/indigenouspeoples>

### Problems Faced by Indigenous Peoples:

Poverty  
Lack of Basic Health Services  
Gap in Life Expectancy  
Low level of education  
Lack of protection of intellectual and cultural property rights  
Unemployment  
Human Rights  
Land and Resources  
Self Determination  
Durie, M. H. (2012)

## MORTALITY DISPARITY RATES

American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) in the IHS Service Area  
2008-2010 and U.S. All Races 2009  
(Age-adjusted mortality rates per 100,000 population)

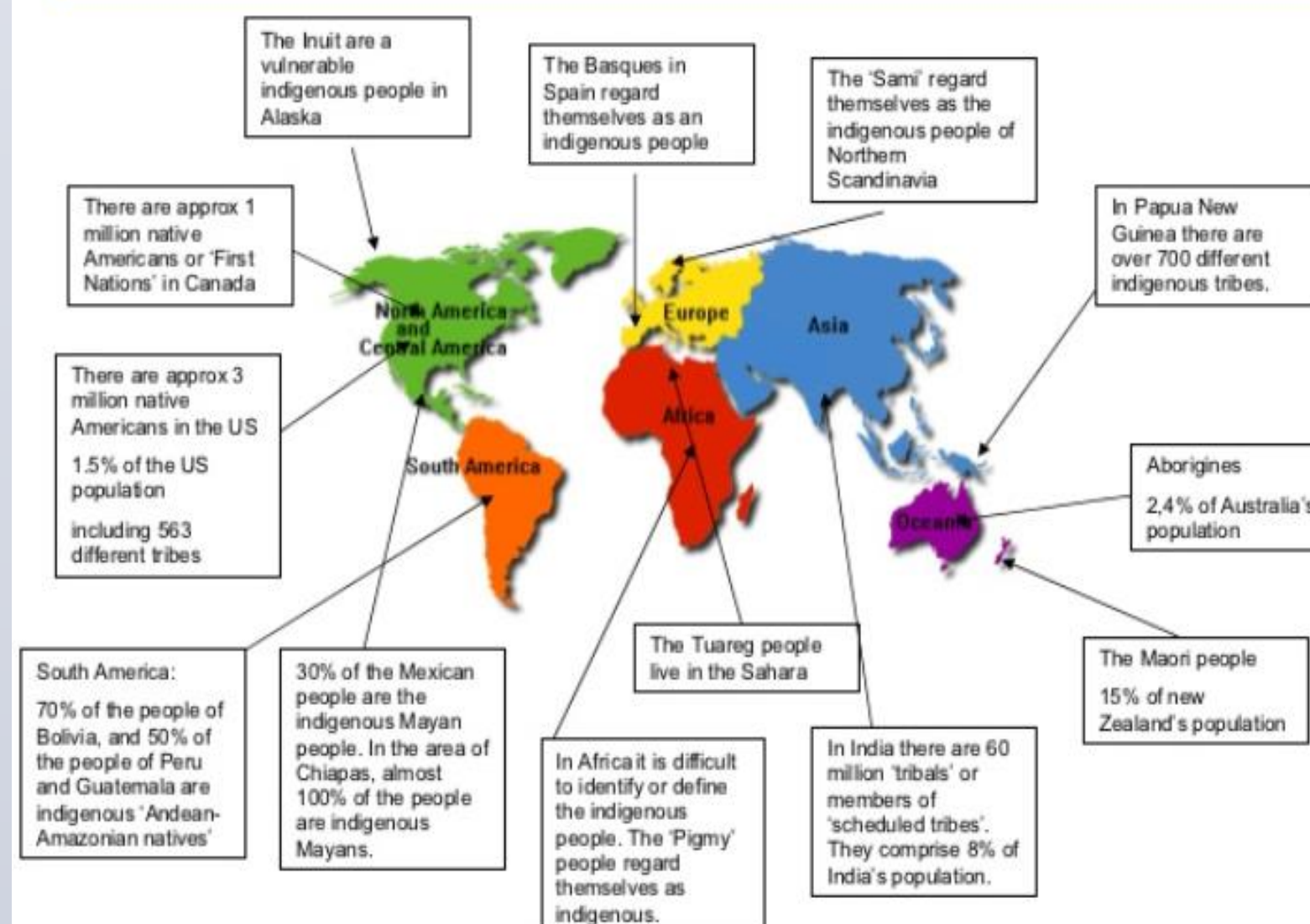
	AI/AN Rate 2008-2010	U.S. All Races Rate - 2009	Ratio: AI/AN to U.S. All Races
ALL CAUSES*	986.5	749.6	1.3
Diseases of the heart	189.7	182.8	1.0
Malignant neoplasm (cancer)	180.6	173.5	1.0
Accidents (unintentional injuries)*	94.7	37.5	2.5
Diabetes mellitus (diabetes)	63.6	21.0	3.0
Alcohol-induced	51.9	7.4	7.0
Chronic lower respiratory diseases	47.2	42.7	1.1
Chronic liver disease and cirrhosis	43.7	9.1	4.8
Cerebrovascular diseases (stroke)	40.6	39.6	1.0
Influenza and pneumonia	26.0	16.5	1.6
Nephritis, nephrotic syndrome (kidney disease)	24.2	15.7	1.5
Drug-induced	23.9	12.6	1.9
Intentional self-harm (suicide)	20.2	11.8	1.7
Hypertensive diseases	18.9	18.7	1.0
Alzheimer's disease	17.9	24.2	0.7
Septicemia	17.4	11.0	1.6
Assault (homicide)	11.6	5.5	2.1

\* Unintentional injuries include motor vehicle crashes.

NOTE: Rates are adjusted to compensate for misreporting of American Indian and Alaska Native race on state death certificates. American Indian and Alaska Native age-adjusted death rate columns present data for the 3-year period specified. U.S. All Races columns present data for a one-year period. Rates are based on American Indian and Alaska Native alone; 2010 census with bridged-race categories.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Indian Health Service. (2017). Disparities: The Federal Health Program for American Indians and Alaska Natives. <https://www.ihs.gov/newsroom/factsheets/disparities>

## Indigenous peoples around the world



<https://images.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search?p=Graphic+view+of+indigenous+peoples+around+the+world>

## Supportive Factors of Native American and Indigenous Peoples:

### Traditional Health Beliefs and Practices:

- Enduring spirit: Durability, identity, adaptability, perseverance, and tenaciousness
- Holistic approach to life: A desire to promote well-being of the group
- Communal ceremonies: To promote well-being of entire tribal group
- Role of elders as advisers: Important to lives of individual members
- Religion, Philosophy, and Spirituality:
  - Spiritual belief: Interconnectedness of man, Creator/God, fellow man, and nature
  - Healing is considered sacred work: Consideration for spiritual aspect of the individual
  - Often use “white man’s medicine” to treat “white man’s diseases” (e.g., diabetes, cancer, etc.) and
  - Indian medicine to treat Indian problems (pain, disturbed relationships, sickness of the spirit)
  - Spirituality permeates all aspects of life: Holistic worldview influences both the physical & emotional well-being
  - Duality: May be Christian and also follow traditional spiritual practices and beliefs
  - Illness means imbalance: Illness involves imbalance, not just symptoms, and is holistic in approach

### Shared beliefs:

- All healing begins with the Great Spirit with an opportunity to purify one’s soul
- Illness affects body, mind, and spirit; health is maintained by preserving harmony among all parts.
- Plants, animals, and humans are all part of the spirit world intermingled with the physical world
- Death is a natural phenomenon of life. The spirit existed before and will exist after the body dies
- One’s relationship with others and the earth are essential components of health and are felt by the individual and the family

### Overall Strengths and Protective Factors:

- Adaptability
- Community Strength
- Connection with the Past
- Family and Elders: Traditional kinship and extended-family structures
- Holistic Thinking

Management Sciences for Health (MSH) & HRSA. (2003).

### Contact Information

Valerie Markley, DNP, PMHCNS-BC  
812.332.7164 [markley@indiana.edu](mailto:markley@indiana.edu).

### Please Note:

References available per handout.