VULNERABILITY IS DEFINED AS...
the degree to which a population or individual is susceptible to harm or neglect influenced by both inherent (e.g., age, sex, race) and acquired (e.g., health behaviors, environment, sociocultural behaviors) risk factors. Risk factors contribute to the vulnerability of an individual or population. Inherent and acquired elements dynamically interact and influence the health outcomes of a person or group.

VULNERABLE POPULATIONS ARE...
groups and communities at a higher risk for poor physical, psychological, or social health. These barriers are further intensified due to social, economic, political, and environmental components. Limitations due to illness or disability can also influence the vulnerability of a population.

01 THOSE WITH PHYSICAL HEALTH NEEDS
include:
- mothers and infants
- the elderly
- chronically ill or groups living with physical disabilities
- populations living with HIV/AIDS

02 THOSE WITH PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH NEEDS
include:
- groups living with mental illness or disabilities
- substance users
- the suicide or homicide prone

03 THOSE WITH SOCIAL HEALTH NEEDS
include:
- families experiencing domestic violence
- homeless populations
- immigrants and refugees
- populations with low literacy rates

04 THOSE WITH BARRIERS OR LIMITATIONS
include:
- racial, ethnic, sexual, or gender minorities
- rural residents with limited access to healthcare services
- economically disadvantaged
- the uninsured
Defining Vulnerable Populations

RESOURCES

1. Center for Disease Control and Prevention's National Environmental Public Health Tracking Network: www.cdc.gov/nceh/tracking/topics/PopulationsVulnerabilities.htm

REFERENCES


ABOUT THE TEXAS EPIDEMIC PUBLIC HEALTH INSTITUTE (TEPHI)

TEPHI is a new state agency dedicated to preparing Texas for the next infectious disease outbreak by strengthening the capacity and resiliency of all Texas communities to respond to future epidemics. Through our work, we aim to serve as a national model of regional epidemic preparedness and lay the groundwork for a coordinated and collaborative response.

Learn more at tephi.texas.gov