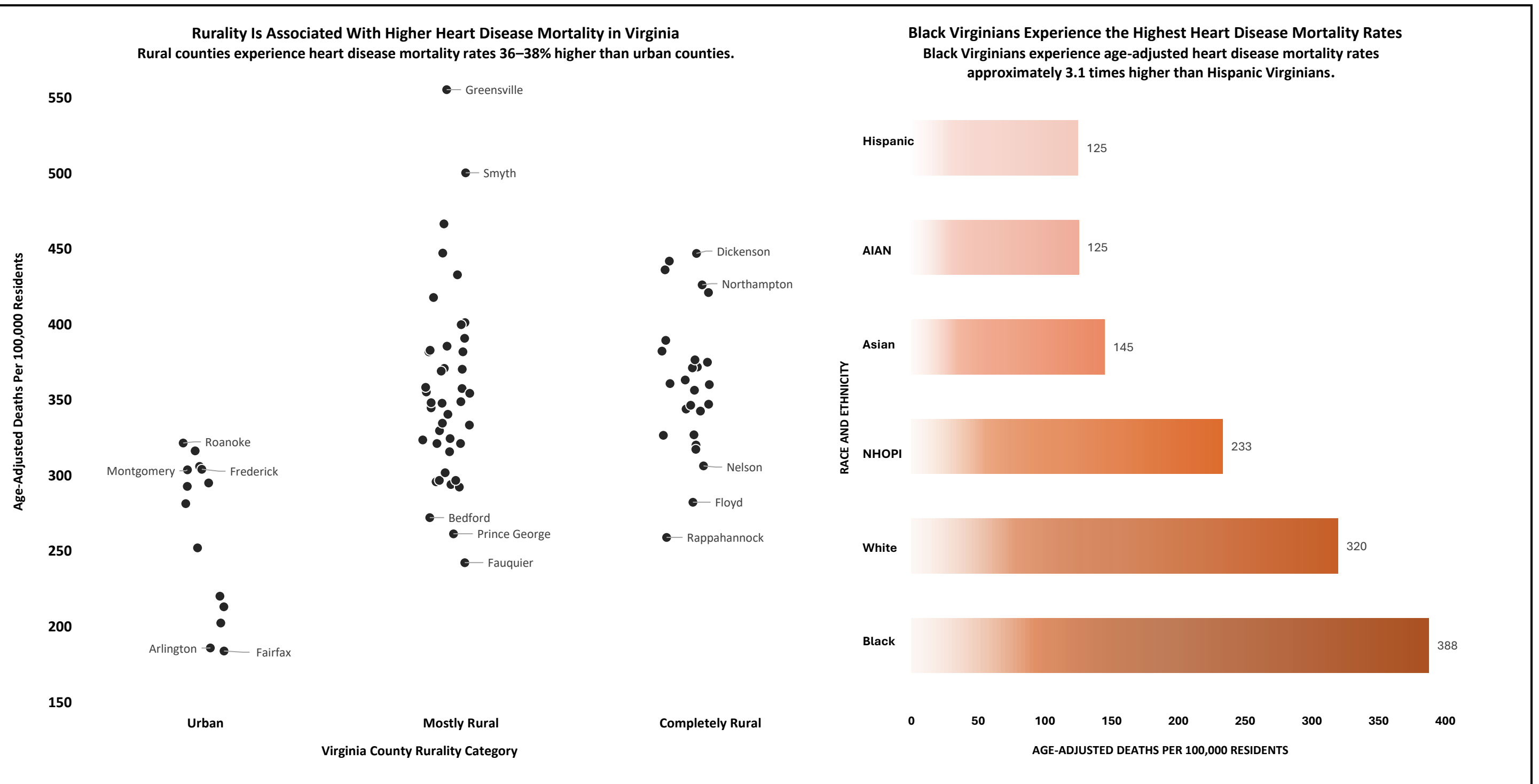


Heart Disease Mortality in Virginia Reflects Both Racial and Geographic Disparities



Source Notes: [CDC heart disease mortality data](#) (2021–2023) were used to calculate age-adjusted death rates per 100,000 residents for Virginia populations and counties. County rurality classifications were obtained from the [Virginia Open Data Portal](#) and reflect 2020 U.S. Census–based designations. NHOPI = Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander; AIAN = American Indian or Alaska Native. Each point in the rurality figure represents a Virginia county. Data accessed December 2025. Visualizations and analysis by Pierce Whitham (2025).

Heart disease mortality in Virginia is shaped by both racial and geographic disparities. County-level analysis shows that average heart disease mortality rates were approximately 36–38% higher in mostly rural and completely rural counties than in urban counties, highlighting the persistent burden of cardiovascular disease in rural communities. At the same time, substantial racial inequities exist statewide, with Black Virginians experiencing age-adjusted heart disease mortality rates approximately 3.1 times higher than Hispanic Virginians. Together, these findings suggest that both place and race are important determinants of cardiovascular health outcomes and should be considered when developing targeted prevention and intervention strategies across Virginia.