

# Gender Representation in Dermatology: An Analysis of U.S. Dermatology Residency Programs and Academic Leadership

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## Background & Objective

- Approximately 37.6% of all active U.S. physicians are female.
- 52.2% of all active U.S. dermatologists are female.<sup>1</sup>
- In this study, we characterize the gender and racial composition of U.S. dermatology residents (DRs), program directors (PDs), and department chairs (DCs).

## Methods

- A list of 146 US accredited dermatology programs was obtained in March 2024 from the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) website.
- Publicly available data from program and hospital websites were used to record the perceived gender, race, and professional title of DRs, PDs, and DCs.
- Gender and race were subjective variables; biographical information, ethnic origins of an individual's name, and photographs provided on department websites were utilized.
- Race and ethnicity were defined according to the guidelines provided by the AAMC.

## Results

### Gender Breakdown According to Race of Dermatology Residents and Faculty Leadership

	Residents (n=1556)	Program Director (n=146)	Chair of Department (n=130)
Male	570	78	80
Female	986	68	50
Asian Male	170	10	12
Asian Female	246	14	9
White Male	314	55	62
White Female	553	51	34
Middle Eastern Male	33	5	3
Middle Eastern Female	51	2	1
Black Male	22	0	0
Black Female	88	5	2
Hispanic Male	47	2	3
Hispanic Female	29	2	3

- 1556 dermatology residents, 146 program directors, and 130 department chairs total
- **63.4% (986) of dermatology residents were female, 46.6% (68) of program directors were female, and 38.5% (50) of department chairs were female.**
- Of White DRs, PDs, and DCs, females represented 63.8% (553), 48.1% (51), and 35.4% (34) of individuals, respectively.
- Of Asian DRs, PDs, and DCs, females represented 59.1% (246), 58.3% (14), and 42.9% (9) of individuals, respectively.
- Of Hispanic DRs, PDs, and DCs, females represented 38.2% (29), 50% (2), and 50% (3) individuals.
- Of Black DRs, PDs, and DCs, females represented 80% (88), 100% (5), and 100% (2) individuals.
- Of Middle Eastern DRs, PDs, and DCs, females represented 60.7% (51), 28.6% (2), and 25% (1) individuals.

## Discussion

- The underrepresentation of females in positions of leadership is reflected across a majority of racial groups.
- **While the majority of dermatology residents in US programs are currently female, program directors and department chairs are not a female-majority.**
- Despite a majority of White dermatology residents being female, there are significantly more White males holding program director and department chair leadership positions.
- The only racial groups where there was equal or more representation of females in positions of academic leadership were for Black and Hispanic dermatologists. This may be partly due to the support of organizations like the Skin of Color Society and NMA Derm whose mission is to empower and increase the representation of female skin of color dermatologists within the field. However, it is important to acknowledge that Black and Hispanic physicians remain underrepresented in medicine and dermatology compared to the general US population.

## Limitations

The interpretation of an individual's gender and race based on photographic images and ethnic origins of their name involves subjective assessment and is inherently limited by the information visible in the photograph and on department websites. As a result, such inferences may not accurately reflect the individual's self-identified gender, racial, or ethnic background. While thorough efforts were made to standardize this process and record data accurately, these characteristics are complex, multifaceted, and personal, and cannot be definitively determined solely through visual examination. We recognize and respect each individual's right to define their identity.

## Citations

1. <https://www.aamc.org/data-reports/workforce/data/active-physicians-sex-specialty-2021>  
2. <https://www.aamc.org/data-reports/students-residents/data/facts-glossary>