

American Cancer Society Report Describes Unique Cancer Profile of Hispanic/Latino Americans

Atlanta 2009/09/15 -The latest edition of Cancer Facts & Figures for Hispanics/Latinos reports that Hispanic/Latino Americans –the largest, fastest-growing, and youngest minority in the United States—have a unique cancer risk profile that requires a targeted approach to cancer prevention. The report finds Hispanic/Latino Americans are less likely than non-Hispanic whites to develop and die from all cancers combined as well as the four most common cancers (female breast, prostate, colorectum, and lung). However, Hispanics have higher rates of several cancers related to infections (stomach, liver, and cervix) and are more likely to have cancer detected at a later stage.

Cancer Facts & Figures for Hispanics/Latinos, first published in 2000 and updated every three years, provides the estimated numbers of new cancer cases and deaths in Hispanics in the current year as well as other cancer statistics for Hispanics, including incidence, survival, and death rates, risk factor data, and screening prevalence. It is intended as a source of information for community leaders, public health and health care workers, and others interested in cancer prevention, early detection, and treatment for Hispanics. The authors of the publication note that most cancer data in the United States are reported for Hispanics as an aggregate group, which may mask differences that exist between Hispanic subpopulations according to country of origin and length of time in the US.

Highlights from the new edition, Cancer Facts & Figures for Hispanics/Latinos 2009-2011, include:

- An estimated 98,900 new cancer cases will be diagnosed in Hispanic/Latinos in 2009. Prostate is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in men, while breast cancer is the most common cancer among women. Colorectal cancer is the second-most common cancer in both men and women.
- An estimated 18,800 Hispanics are expected to die from cancer in 2009; the top two causes of cancer death among men are lung and colorectal cancer, while breast and lung cancer are the top two in women.
- Between 1997 and 2006, cancer incidence rates decreased among Hispanics by 1.3% per year in men and 0.6% per year in women, compared to decreases of 0.8% per year and 0.4% per year in non-Hispanic white men and women, respectively.
- During the same time period, cancer death rates among Hispanics decreased by 2.2% per year in men and 1.2% per year in women, compared to decreases in non-Hispanic whites of 1.5% per year in men and 0.9% per year in women.

The report also finds that compared to non-Hispanic whites, Hispanic/Latino Americans:

- have lower incidence and death rates for all cancers combined and for the most common cancer sites (prostate, breast, lung, and colorectum);
- have higher rates of cancers of the stomach, cervix, liver, and gallbladder, and of acute lymphocytic leukemia;
- have a later stage of diagnosis for many cancers, including breast and melanoma;
- have generally similar 5-year survival, except for melanoma, for which survival rates are lower in Hispanic compared to non-Hispanic white men (79% versus 87%) and women (88% versus 92%);
- are less likely to smoke and drink alcohol;
- and are more likely to be poor, have fewer years of education, and lack health insurance.

“The Hispanic/Latino population will benefit from the same approaches that are most important in reducing cancer risk in the general population – preventing and treating tobacco dependence, increasing access to immunization programs, high quality cancer screening and appropriate follow-up care, increasing physical activity, and maintaining a healthy body weight,” said Vilma Cokkinides, Ph.D., American Cancer Society director for risk factor surveillance. “In addition, many Hispanics face barriers to receiving adequate, affordable health care that likely have a significant impact on prevention, early detection, and treatment of cancer.”

About the American Cancer Society

The American Cancer Society combines an unyielding passion with nearly a century of experience to save lives and end suffering from cancer. As a global grassroots force of more than three million volunteers, we fight for every birthday threatened by every cancer in every community. We save lives by helping people stay well by preventing cancer or detecting it early; helping people get well by being there for them during and after a cancer diagnosis; by finding cures through investment in groundbreaking discovery; and by fighting back by rallying lawmakers to pass laws to defeat cancer and by rallying communities worldwide to join the fight. As the nation’s largest non-governmental investor in cancer research, contributing about \$3.4 billion, we turn what we know about cancer into what we do. As a result, more than 11 million people in America who have had cancer and countless more who have avoided it will be celebrating birthdays this year. To learn more about us or to get help, call us anytime, day or night, at 1-800-227-2345 or visit cancer.org.

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David Sampson
Director, Medical & Scientific Communications
American Cancer Society
213 368-8523
david.sampson@cancer.org
