VOICES of Black Women Study Broadens Scope to Maximize Impact

The groundbreaking study expands age and geography eligibility to capture more life experiences to improve the health of Black women

ATLANTA, May 11, 2026 – VOICES of Black Women, a groundbreaking study designed and led by Black women to better understand and improve the health of Black women across the nation, announced an expansion of participant eligibility requirements to broaden the scope of life experiences Black women can share. The previous age requirement of 25 to 55 years old was expanded to 20 to 60 years old, and enrollment broadened from specific states to nationwide. Grounded in community partnership and scientific rigor, the study is supported by the American Cancer Society. It aims to elevate lived experiences to inform future cancer prevention, treatment, and survivorship efforts.

“We will continue to look at ways we can improve the study's design to make sure we’re maximizing the potential impact of the data we’re gathering,” said Dr. Lauren McCullough, co-principal investigator of the study and senior scientific director of epidemiology research at the American Cancer Society. “This change was driven by a need to balance enrolling women young enough to capture meaningful earlier life experiences with enrolling women old enough for cancer to develop during the study period. Expanding our footprint now allows us the opportunity to capture more meaningful life experiences to answer these important prevention and disparity questions.”

VOICES of Black Women launched in 20 states and D.C. in May 2024. Eligible participants must identify as Black, now be between the ages of 20 and 60, reside in the United States, and have never been diagnosed with cancer except certain skin cancers. Enrolled participants will provide informed consent and answer behavioral, environmental, and lived experience questions through periodic short surveys delivered via a secure online portal. VOICES will collect data on traditional factors that impact health (e.g., diet, exercise) and delve deeper into emerging research on social support, discrimination and racism, and generational wealth. No medication, clinical testing, treatment, or lifestyle changes are required.

“We’re working toward our goal of 100,000 Black women enrolled, and we encourage everyone who fits our participant profile to join us in centering Black women’s experiences in research that advances health equity,” said Dr. Alpa Patel, co-principal investigator and senior vice president of population science at the American Cancer Society. “We know trust in medical research is critical. We’re focused on demonstrating cultural humility and treating the data gathered with respect. VOICES stands apart as a study that is bringing together a national network of Black women scientists, researchers, and community leaders focused on sharing new research findings and providing information tools to improve the health of Black women as soon as possible.”

A global leader in cancer research, the American Cancer Society has a 70-year history of funding and conducting some of the world’s largest and most impactful population cohort studies to understand how cancer develops in populations, identify cancer risk factors, and improve survivorship and outcomes after diagnosis. Through these studies, over 2.5 million research participants have contributed to landmark discoveries in cancer science like the linkage of cigarette smoking to lung cancer, obesity to the risk of early death, and red and processed meat intake to higher risk of colon cancer. These and other discoveries have contributed to a 33 percent age-adjusted reduction in cancer mortality rates since rates peaked in 1991. But despite these significant strides in cancer research, Black women continue to have the highest death rate and the shortest survival of any racial or ethnic group in the U.S. for most cancers. The organization’s support of the study demonstrates its focus on eliminating deeply rooted barriers that have caused long-standing inequities in cancer outcomes.

For more information about the VOICES of Black Women® study and how to participate, please visit voices.cancer.org.

Find more media resources here at pressroom.cancer.org/VOICES.

About the American Cancer Society
The American Cancer Society is a leading cancer-fighting organization with a vision to end cancer as we know it,

for everyone. For more than 110 years, we have been improving the lives of people with cancer and their families as the only organization combating cancer through advocacy, research, and patient support. We are committed to ensuring everyone has an opportunity to prevent, detect, treat, and survive cancer. To learn more, visit cancer.org or call our 24/7 helpline at 1-800-227-2345. Connect with us on Facebook, X, and Instagram.

For further information: Darrya.lipscomb@cancer.org

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