



1998

The National Hispanic Leadership Initiative on Cancer:

En Acción

Preventing Cancer in Hispanics

Breast Cancer



Breast cancer is the most common type of cancer among women of all races in the United States^{1,2}.

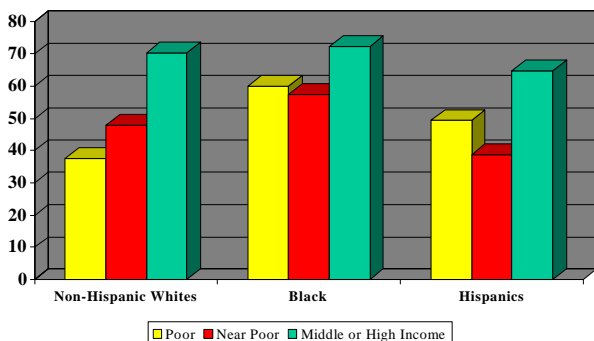
Even though Hispanic women have lower rates of breast cancer (69.8 per 100,000) compared to Non-Hispanic White women or Black women (111.8 and 95.4 respectively), breast cancer is the leading cause of cancer death among Hispanics^{1,4}.

Hispanic women have lower breast cancer screening rates than Non-Hispanic White women and tend to seek and attain health care services less than other ethnic groups^{5,6}.

Poverty, lack of insurance, low education, limited access to health care, lack of awareness of breast cancer risks and screening methods, physician referrals, and barriers related to language, culture, and negative provider attitudes, play an important role in the lower rates of screening services utilization by Hispanic women^{5,7}.

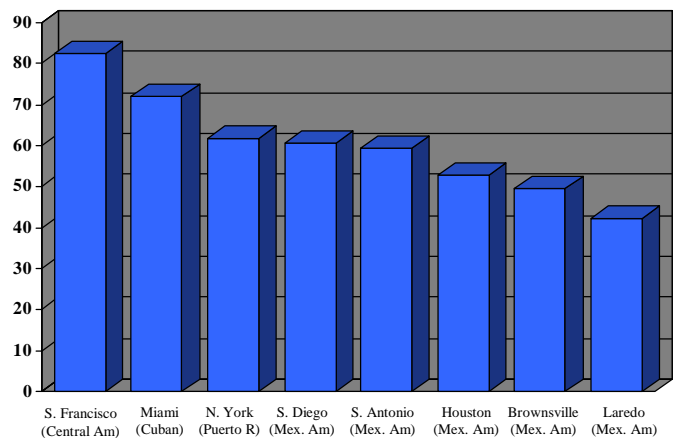
Hispanic women not only differ from Non-Hispanic White and Black women. According to baseline data from the *A Su Salud En Acción* study, Hispanic subgroups differ from each other in terms of their mammography screening participation.

Fig 1. Mammography within the past two years among women 50 years of age and over



Source: CDC, NCHS, NHIS. See related Health United States, 1998, fig 45.

Figure 2. Recent Mammography by Region/Ethnic Group



Source: En Acción baseline data 1992.

Low screening participation rates make Hispanic women more likely to be diagnosed at a more advanced stage of the disease, when fewer treatment options are available, resulting in poorer outcomes and higher mortality⁹.

All Women are at Risk!

One or more of the following conditions place a woman at higher than average risk for breast cancer^{1,2}:

- Age.
- Having a mother, sister or daughter who has had breast cancer.
- Starting to menstruate at an early age (before 12).
- Having a late menopause (after 55).
- Having first child after the age of 30.
- Having had breast cancer before
- Mutations in genes called BRCA1 y BRCA2
- Breast condition that may predispose to cancer or having had two or more biopsies for benign breast disease
- Having 75% or more dense breast tissue on previous mammogram that made mammography reading difficult.



The majority of women (80%) diagnosed with breast cancer have NO known risk factors^{1,2}.

Early Detection Saves Lives!

Only 38% of Hispanic women age 40 and older have regular screening mammograms, a simple procedure that can detect breast cancer at its earliest stage, before clinical symptoms develop^{1,2,8}.

Deaths from breast cancer can be reduced by 30% through regular mammograms, complemented with clinical breast exam and breast self-examination^{1,2}.

Recommended Guidelines for Women of Different Ages^{1,2}

Age	Screening Procedure	Frequency
20 and over	Breast Self-Exam	Every Month
20-39	Clinical Breast Exam	Every three years
40 and over	Clinical Breast Exam	Every year
40 and over	Mammogram	Every one to two years
50 and over	Mammogram	Every year

Other Resources:

National Cancer Institute: 1-800-422-6237
 American Cancer Society: 1-800-227-2345
 Susan G. Komen Foundation: 1-800-462-9273

References

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