

NIH releases comprehensive new data outlining Hispanic/Latino health and habits ^[1]

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A comprehensive health and lifestyle analysis of people from a range of Hispanic/ Latino origins shows that this segment of the U.S. population is diverse, not only in ancestry, culture, and economic status, but also in the prevalence of several diseases, risk factors, and lifestyle habits.

These health data are derived from the Hispanic Community Health Study/Study of Latinos (HCHS/SOL), a landmark study that enrolled about 16,415 Hispanic/Latino adults living in San Diego, Chicago, Miami, and the Bronx, N.Y., who self-identified with Central American, Cuban, Dominican, Mexican, Puerto Rican, or South American origins. These new findings have been compiled and published as the Hispanic Community Health Study Data Book: A Report to the Communities.

“Although Hispanics represent 1 out of every 6 people in the U.S., our knowledge about Hispanic health has been limited,” said Larissa Avilés-Santa, M.D., M.P.H, a medical officer in the Division of Cardiovascular Sciences at the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI), part of the

National Institutes of Health, and project officer of the HCHS/SOL. “These detailed findings provide a foundation to address questions about the health of the U.S. Hispanic/Latino population and a critical understanding of risk factors that could lead to improved health in all communities.

“The information contained in the HCHS/SOL data book will enable individuals, communities, scientists, and health policy makers to tailor health intervention strategies to improve the health of all Hispanics,” she added.

The numerous findings described by the HCHS/SOL researchers confirmed some existing knowledge while also uncovering some new health trends. Among the items highlighting Hispanic diversity:

- The percentage of people who reported having asthma ranged from 7.4 (among those of Mexican ancestry) to 35.8 (among those of Puerto Rican ancestry).
- The percentage of individuals with hypertension ranged from 20.3 (South American) to 32.2 (Cuban).
- The percentage of people eating five or more servings of fruits/vegetables daily ranged from 19.2 (Puerto Rican origin) to 55.0 (Cuban origin). Also, men reported consuming more fruit and vegetables than women.
- Women reported a much lower consumption of sodium than men among all Hispanic groups represented in the study.

The new data also found some areas of more general importance for Hispanic health.

- About 1 in 3 individuals had pre-diabetes, also fairly evenly distributed among Hispanic groups.
- Only about half of individuals with diabetes among all Hispanic groups had it under control.

During the first phase of HCHS/SOL, study participants underwent an extensive clinical evaluation to identify the prevalence of diseases and risk or protective factors, as well as lifestyle and sociocultural and economic factors. While cardiovascular and lung health were key components of the evaluation, HCHS/SOL also performed a dental exam, hearing tests, and a glucose tolerance test. Most of the information presented in this Data Book was collected through interviews. Analyses of clinical measurements performed during the baseline examination are underway and will be published in the future.

Since the baseline examination, which took place from 2008 to 2011, study participants have answered an annual interview. This is being done to explore the relationship between baseline health profiles and changes in health, particularly cardiovascular health. A new examination period is expected to start in October 2014 to reassess certain health measurements and understand the relationship between the identified risk factors during the first visit and future disease in Hispanic populations.

The HCHS/SOL project was led by NHLBI, with additional funding from six other Institutes.

Read the full HCHS/SOL Data Book: A Report to the Communities here:

<http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/resources/obesity/pop-studies/hchs.htm> [3]

To schedule an interview with an NHLBI spokesperson, please contact the NHLBI Office of Communications at 301-496-4236 or nhlbi_news@nhlbi.nih.gov [4].

Related Study Links

- HCHS/SOL: <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/resources/obesity/pop-studies/hchs.htm> [3]
 - Two NIH landmark studies show power of epidemiology research; underscore need to address health disparities: <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/news/press-releases/2012/two-nih-landmark-studies-show-power-of-epidemiology-research-underscore-need-to-address-health-disparities.html> [5]
 - 2012 JAMA paper about the Hispanic Community Health Study/Study of Latinos (HCHS-SOL): <http://jama.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?articleid=1389614> [6]
- External Web Site Policy [7]

Related Hispanic/Latino Health Links

- The NHLBI website has information and resources in both English and Spanish about heart and vascular diseases: <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/index.htm> [8]
- For Latinos, like other racial and ethnic minorities, the Affordable Care Act will address inequities and increase access to quality, affordable health coverage, invest in prevention and wellness, and give individuals and families more control over their care.

A report issued this month by HHS found that that nearly 8 in 10 uninsured Latinos may qualify for Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), or lower costs on monthly premiums through the Health Insurance Marketplace.

Enrollment in the Marketplace is open until March 31.

Available Tools for Enrollments Include

- Online through HealthCare.gov or in Spanish at CuidadoDeSalud.gov [9]
- External Web Site Policy [7]
- Over the phone by calling the 24/7 customer service center (1-800-318-2596, TTY 1-855-889-4325);
 - Working with a trained person in your local community (A *Find Local Help* section is available on both HealthCare.gov [10] External Web Site Policy [7] and CuidadoDeSalud.gov [9] External Web Site Policy [7])
 - Submitting a paper application by mail.

Part of the National Institutes of Health, the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI) plans, conducts, and supports research related to the causes, prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of heart, blood vessel, lung, and blood diseases; and sleep disorders. The Institute also administers national health education campaigns on women and heart disease, healthy weight for children, and other topics. NHLBI press releases and other materials are available online at <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov>. [11]

About the National Institutes of Health (NIH): NIH, the nation's medical research agency, includes 27 Institutes and Centers and is a component of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. NIH is the primary federal agency conducting and supporting basic, clinical, and translational medical research, and is investigating the causes, treatments, and cures for both common and rare diseases. For more information about NIH and its programs, visit www.nih.gov [12].

Tags:

- [HCHS/SOL](#) [13]
- [Estudio de los Latinos](#) [14]
- [salud](#) [15]
- [NIH](#) [16]
- [NHLBI](#) [17]
- [Larissa Avilés Santa](#) [18]
- [salud pública](#) [19]
- [hispanos](#) [20]
- [latinos](#) [21]

Content Categories:

- [Biological and health sciences](#) [22]

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Links

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