Arthritis Takes Its Toll on 3.1 Million Latinos

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Arthritis, the most common cause of disability in the United States, is causing severe and debilitating pain in more than one fifth of the 3 million Latinos who suffer from it, according to a study published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and reported by MedPage Today.

For the study, researchers looked at four years of data from the National Health Interview Survey. The data was broken down into Latino subgroups in order to look at the prevalence of arthritis and how its conditions affect individual lives.

Researchers found that the frequency of debilitating arthritis in Latinos was generally greater than or comparable to the rate reported by non-Latino whites and blacks, even though arthritis is more common among these non-Latinos.

Specifically, 48.5 percent of Puerto Ricans reported arthritis-attributable activity limitations (AAL), and 44.1 percent reported severe joint pain. Similarly, 21.1 percent of Cubans and Cuban Americans reported AAL, and 23.7 percent reported severe joint pain, and up to 41.6 percent of Central and South Americans and Mexicans reported AAL.

According to the report, arthritis was most common in participants older than 65, women, and individuals who were obese.

“This study will help us to target our limited resources in ways that maximize the impact public health measures can have on improving the lives of Hispanics with arthritis,” said Wayne H. Giles, MD, MS, the director of the CDC’s Division of Adult and Community Health.

To help educate Latinos about arthritis, including how to detect the symptoms and catch it early, the National Alliance for Hispanic Health has started a bilingual program titled “Su Familia.” For more info, click here.

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