Latinos Fall Behind on Cancer Screenings

January 30, 2012

The number of Americans, and especially Latinos, being screened for common cancers has fallen below national targets, according to findings published in the Centers for Disease and Control Prevention's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report and reported by HealthDay News.

"Not all Americans are getting recommended screening for breast, cervical and colorectal cancer," said report coauthor Mary C. White,branch chief of the CDC's Division of Cancer Prevention and Control. "There continue to be disparities for certain populations."

In 2010, 72.4 percent of women were screened for breast cancer, below the target of 81 percent; 83 percent of women were screened for cervical cancer, while that target was 93 percent; and 58.6 percent of Americans were screened for colon cancer, missing the target of 70.5 percent.

The numbers fell even farther for Latinos. They were less likely than non-Latinos to be screened for cervical and colon cancer (78.7percent and 46.5 percent, respectively).

By ignoring regularly scheduled screenings, Latinos may been dangering their health, said Stephanie Bernik, MD, chief of surgical oncology at Lenox Hill Hospital in New York City.

"Screening saves lives," she said. "When you catch a cancer at a smaller size it does affect outcome."

What's holding back Latinos from keeping those appointments? Some people may be confused about what screenings are important because different medical groups have different protocols; other people may be scared of over-treatment.

"People look for any excuse not to get screened," Bernik said. "And with screening comes the risk [of over-treatment]," she said. "Unfortunately, we are not at a point where we can select the patients that are not going to have a problem, so we treat everyone equally. So, there is a little bit of over-treatment, but overall, you are improving survival for many people."

The U.S. Preventative Task Force recommends that women between 50 and 74 years old get a mammogram every two years to screen for breast cancer; that women between 21 and 65 years old and those who have been sexually active for three years get a Pap test to screen for cervical cancer; and that men and women between 50 and 75 years old be screened for colorectal cancer

ever year.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.
http://beta.docker.tusaludmag.com/article/Latinos-Cancer-Screening-21835-7922