Latinas Experience Highest Rate of Inaccurate Mammogram Results

Inaccuracies may be linked to particular imaging facilities and processes.

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Researchers from UNC Lineberger Comprehensive Cancer Center in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, discovered racial disparities among mammography results and found that Latinas have the least accurate results.

The multi-institutional study published in Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers & Prevention reviewed over 265,000 diagnostic mammograms from 98 facilities; women were followed for one year to see whether they developed breast cancer.

Non-Latina white women had the highest rates of accurate cancer detection (36 per 1,000 mammograms), and Latina women had the lowest (22 per 1,000 mammograms).

“Even though we found some differences between racial and ethnic groups that we evaluated, none of the mammogram practices fell below the minimal acceptable standards for diagnostic interpretation that were published in 2013,” UNC Lineberger’s Sarah J. Nyante, PhD, MSPH, an associate professor of radiology at UNC School of Medicine and the study’s corresponding author, said in a news release. “Our study is documenting differences in outcomes and giving us an understanding of how we can get better in terms of science and particularly, in delivering equitable health care.”

Researchers determined that the imaging facility itself and the concurrent use of breast ultrasound or MRI contributed to the disparities found.

“If our study showed that a factor was particularly important and impacted disparities, we hope to develop a follow-up study where we can really dig into those details because there are many factors that could affect differences by facility,” Nyante said. “There are a lot of things that are within a facility’s control, including scheduling and hiring of accredited radiologists.”

To learn more, read “Women Who Speak Only Spanish Less Likely to Get Mammograms.”

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