TuSalud

Latinas With Lupus Have High Death Rate

Latinas with lupus have a greater mortality risk than Latinas without the disease.

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Minorities are more likely to be diagnosed with and have more severe outcomes from

systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE), an autoimmune disease and the most common form of lupus that causes multiorgan inflammation. Now new findings published in the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report reveal that Latinos have a higher lupus mortality rate than previously expected.

Researchers studied 812 patients with SLE in San Francisco County from 2007 to 2017. An estimated 38% were white, 20% were Black, 36% were Asian, 17% were Latino and 5% were mixed/other race. Ninety percent were female.

Study results revealed that 135 of these patients had died of SLE by 2017. The most deaths were seen among African Americans (25%), followed by Latinos (15.5%), Asians (15.3%) and whites (14.4%).

On average, patients were diagnosed with the disease at around 35 years old. The mean age of death for these patients was 62, and SLE mortality was found to increase with age.

Investigators concluded that mortality was nearly four times higher than expected among Asians and Latinos, especially Latinas. Among women, Asians with SLE were four times more likely to die than those without the condition in the general population. Latinas with SLE were six times more likely to die than other Latinas without SLE.

The high mortality rate among these populations could be a result of "more severe outcomes and manifestations of SLE" or "possibly less access to care," noted study authors.

African Americans with SLE tended to die 6.8 years earlier on average than white people. In comparison, Latinos with SLE died 9.5 years earlier than those who didn't identify as Latino.

The CDC, the Lupus Foundation of America and the American College of Rheumatology are currently conducting research in hopes of understanding racial, ethnic and socioeconomic disparities among people with systemic lupus erythematosus. Overall, the goal is to also develop

SLE-specific interventions to “ensure that persons with SLE receive a timely diagnosis and appropriate treatments that might help address SLE-associated mortality.”

For additional lupus coverage, click here.