

U.S. Latino Neighborhoods Have Less Access to Health Care

Study findings highlight the need for more inclusive health care policies that serve the U.S. Latino community.

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University of Texas Southwestern (UTSW) researchers found that Latinos living in majority-Latino neighborhoods often face socioeconomic disadvantages, such as less [access to health care](#), according to a [UTSW news release](#).

An estimated 63.7 million Latinos live in the United States, according to [the U.S. Census](#). Many Latinos live in areas where specific ethnic groups reside called enclaves.

Published in the [Journal of General Internal Medicine](#), the study suggests that Latino enclaves experience significantly worse health outcomes due to higher rates of [poverty](#), lack of [health insurance](#) and more.

Researchers used data from the 2000 Census and the 2008–2012 American Community Survey to identify Latino enclaves in the five states that house nearly two thirds of all U.S. Latinos: California, Florida, New Jersey, New York and Texas.

They defined Latino enclaves as areas with 250 or more Latino residents and a high degree of cultural distinctiveness, including foreign-born Latino residents, Spanish speakers with limited English proficiency and households that speak only Spanish.

Compared with non-Latino neighborhoods, Latino enclaves had higher proportions of poverty, uninsured individuals and crowded housing. These neighborhoods also had fewer parks, fewer vehicles per household and more crime, according to UTSW.

What's more, Latino enclaves with high poverty levels paired with other socioeconomic factors

scored lower than non-Latino neighborhoods in most states for health care access.

“Ultimately, our results showed that Hispanic or Latino enclaves face significant disadvantages that could affect residents’ health. These are important things to consider to really understand our community members and to help meet their needs,” said study leader Sandi Pruitt, PhD, professor in the Peter O’Donnell Jr. School of Public Health and associate director of community outreach, engagement, and equity in the Harold C. Simmons Comprehensive Cancer Center at UTSW.

Pruitt said the findings highlight the need for more inclusive health policies that support the U.S. Latino community and its unique needs, such as expanding health insurance coverage for documented and undocumented residents.

To read more, click [#Access to Care](#). There, you’ll find headlines such as “[Spanish Language Website to Boost Stroke Awareness in Latinos](#),” “[Physicians of Color More Likely to Care for Medicaid Patients](#)” and “[Improving Lung Cancer Outcomes in Latinos Through Clinical Trial Participation](#).”