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IHPR Job Opportunities

View job Opportunities for the IHPR [here](#).
 View job Opportunities for The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio [here](#).

Join the IHPR's Research Networks

The IHPR directs two national networks geared to boost Latino health. Visit and join *Redes En Acción*: The National Latino Cancer Research Network at www.redesenaccion.org and *Salud America!* The RWJF Research Network to Prevent Obesity Among Latino Children at www.salud-america.org.

Share Your News

We welcome your news items, story ideas and suggestions. Please e-mail them to IHPR@uthscsa.edu to be featured in our quarterly E-newsletter.

New collaboration to increase cancer research in Texas' Valley region

The Institute for Health Promotion Research (IHPR) and The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio are working to foster cancer research in the Rio Grande Valley in partnership with the University of Texas-Pan American (UTPA).

The effort is being funded by parallel National Cancer Institute grants, including more than \$630,000 awarded to the Health Science Center and \$910,000 to UTPA last fall.

The exploratory grants will fund three pilot projects in cancer research, training, and outreach to reduce Hispanics' cancer burden and boost the number of cancer researchers coming from Texas.

The first project already is under way between Dr. Susan L. Naylor, principal investigator for the Health Science Center grant and a professor in the Department of Cellular and Structural Biology, and Dr. Bimal K. Banik, a chemist who is principal investigator on the UTPA grant. Dr. Banik will synthesize new compounds. Dr. Naylor will train UTPA students to run tests on those compounds to gauge their cancer-fighting abilities. The students will begin training at the Health Science Center in April.

Two other projects will start in the fall. **One** teams Dr. Amelie G. Ramirez, a nationally recognized authority in health disparities from the Health Science Center's Institute for Health Promotion Research (IHPR), with Dr. José A. Pagán, a UTPA economist who looks at health disparities from an economic perspective. They will be joined by IHPR researchers Drs. Luis F. Velez, Patricia Chalela, and Jennifer Salinas.



Dr. Susan Naylor



Dr. Ramirez, her team, and Dr. Pagán will examine Latinas' knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors regarding breast cancer genetic testing. The goal is to develop and pre-test a survey that accurately assesses the factors that go into Latinas' decision-making process.

"Oftentimes, we know that the Latino community does not have a lot of information about the availability of genetic tests and what their utility is," Dr. Ramirez said.

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Director's Corner

From IHPR Director Dr. Amelie G. Ramirez

New research suggests that breast cancer may be harder to treat in Hispanic women because they wait longer to receive care.

These women face language and cultural barriers, lifestyle choices and a lack of insurance that often affects their health and medical care, according to study results released in early February at the American Association for Cancer Research's Science of Cancer Health Disparities Conference, which I attended.

About half of the study's 230 Mexican-American breast cancer patients in Arizona and Texas noticed changes in their breasts, but waited more than a month to seek medical attention, according to a [CNN news report](#) about the study.

Hispanic women have a lower incidence rate of breast cancer than other racial groups, but

they are less likely to survive because of the delayed treatment.

Data from the study also showed that about two-thirds of breast cancer cases among the 230 study participants were found through self detection – suggesting that the women were not receiving routine mammograms or screenings.

At the IHPR, we are researching ways to increase breast cancer screening, including producing culturally appropriate educational materials and public service announcements, as well as developing behavioral interventions to test the best strategies to promote cancer screening, genetic testing, and clinical trial participation among Latinas.



Dr. Amelie Ramirez

Also, through our *Redes En Acción* national cancer research network, we have launched a national patient navigator program that uses a trained lay health worker to help Latinas access cancer care services following an abnormal mammogram. We hope to reduce the lag time between screening, diagnosis, and treatment; reduce non-compliance after abnormal screening; and improve patient satisfaction with the health care system.

Click [here](#) to access our culturally relevant breast cancer educational materials and public service announcements.

As always, please feel free to e-mail us at ihpr@uthscsa.edu.

Dr. Amelie G. Ramirez
Director, IHPR

IHPR Faculty Profile: Dr. Patricia Chalela

IHPR researcher Dr. Patricia "Pato" Chalela had always been interested in health. She enjoyed the subject in high school in her native Colombia, and she looked up to her sister who is a scientist skilled in biotechnology.

But her early career truly opened her eyes to public health needs.

As a social worker in late 1980s Colombia, Dr. Chalela witnessed the unnecessary suffering that a community can endure due to preventable disease. Later, while studying at the International Centre for Eye Health at the University of London, she became cognizant of different health disparities affecting developing countries in Africa and Asia and how

to intervene with sometimes simple preventive strategies focused on education.

"That experience not only opened my horizons but convinced me even more of the critical importance of health promotion and disease prevention," Dr. Chalela said.

Dr. Chalela went on to become a Pan American Health Organization-sponsored health promotion intern at the South Texas Health Research Center in San Antonio under Dr. Amelie Ramirez in 1992, and learned how theory-based health communication strategies could be tailored to change health behaviors among Latinos.

She earned a master's degree in public health in 1995 and worked for two years in Colombia in community and preventative medicine. She returned to the U.S. in 1998 to join Dr. Ramirez' research team and earn her doctoral degree in public health.

She has been conducting health research with Dr. Ramirez, her mentor, ever since.

Over the last decade, Dr. Chalela has been involved in many health promotion projects, including tobacco prevention and control programs to empower Latino individuals and communities to quit smoking; projects to reduce breast and cervical cancer disparities; and a national network to reduce Latino childhood obesity.

Dr. Chalela also has published more than a dozen scientific articles and makes presentations about health promotion and disease prevention around the world.

"Pato is valuable member of our IHPR research team. She has made many contributions to our work to reduce health disparities among Latinos in San Antonio and beyond," Dr. Ramirez said. "It has been my pleasure to mentor her and see her career grow."

Dr. Chalela said she is glad to be working to meet public health needs.

"The thing I enjoy most is the fact that, through our research, we can make a difference in peoples' health and lives," she said.



Dr. Patricia Chalela

Fun Facts

Hometown: Bucaramanga, Colombia (South America)

Family: Lebanese father and Colombian mother, two sisters, two brothers

Hobbies: Pencil portrait drawing, listening to music, reading, exercising, spending time with loved ones

Favorite foods: Lebanese and oriental food, fruits and vegetables

Favorite movie(s): WALL-E

Favorite book(s): Mystery books. "Currently reading the Twilight Saga and loving it!"

New Collaboration

► *Continued from Page 1*

The other pilot project is a summer program that will bring UTPA students to the Health Science Center to work in cancer research laboratories beginning in 2010. Dr. Naylor is spearheading the program, along with Dr. Scott Gunn, a UTPA professor of biology.

“I got into scientific research through a summer program. It is an experience that lets somebody know that they really, really want to do science – or that they don’t, which is equally important,” Dr. Naylor said, adding that the summer program “will give them the opportunity to see what it’s like to do research that is competitive at the national level.”

The researchers hope their work over the next four years will lead to a larger

Comprehensive Minority Institution/Cancer Center Partnership grant. But this grant will accomplish many worthwhile things by itself: “I really think that we can make a positive impact with these initial funds,” Dr. Naylor said.

The partnership with UTPA is made easier by the Health Science Center’s Regional Academic Health Center (RAHC) campuses in the Lower Rio Grande Valley – particularly the RAHC’s Medical Research Division in Edinburg, which is located on the UTPA campus.



Dr. Luis Velez



Dr. Patricia Chalela



Dr. Jennifer Salinas

Dr. Leonel Vela, regional dean of the RAHC, is excited about the prospect of partnerships between the two universities and what they might mean for the Valley.

“It addresses the issue of preparing the next generation of science researchers for this area, particularly in cancer research,” Dr. Vela said. “As we build our research enterprise down here, it’s going to be more and more important to recruit locally.”

IHPR Articles and Presentations

IHPR researchers publish scientific articles, speak at conferences

Articles:

- Elder, J.P., Ayala, G.X., **Parra-Medina, D.**, Talavera, G. Health promotion in the Latino community: Communication issues and approaches. *Annual Review of Public Health*, Vol. 30. April 2009. View the abstract [here](#).
- Reyes-Ortiz, CA, **Velez, LF**, Camacho, ME, Ottenbacher, KJ, & Markides, KS. Health insurance and cervical cancer screening among older women in Latin American and Caribbean cities. *International Journal of Epidemiology*, 37(4):870-8. 2008.

Presentations:

- Deborah Parra-Medina, IHPR. “Initial results of the ‘HHER Lifestyle Program’: A Cardiovascular RISK reduction program for financially disadvantaged African American women.” American Academy of Health Behavior meeting in Hilton Head, S.C., March 11, 2009.
- Amelie G. Ramirez, IHPR. “Exploring Innovative Ways to Reduce Disparities and Improve Health.” Presentation to health disparities researchers at The University of Texas at San Antonio, Feb. 24, 2009.

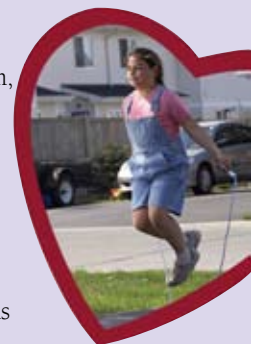
- Amelie G. Ramirez, IHPR. “Kicking the Habit: Taking Aim at Health Disparities in Cancer Screening, Obesity, and Tobacco.” Presentation to the Psychology Department at UTHSCSA, Feb. 19, 2009.
- Luis F. Velez, IHPR. “Keeping Our Children Away from Tobacco.” San Antonio Independent School District’s Parent Summit, Feb. 18, 2009.
- Amelie G. Ramirez, IHPR. “Latinos & Cancer: The Current State, Areas of Research, and Future Directions.” Scientist-Survivor Session, American Association for Cancer Research’s 2009 Science of Cancer Health Disparities, Carefree, Ariz., Feb. 4, 2009.
- Amelie G. Ramirez, IHPR. “Raising Culture as a Priority in Cancer Intervention Research.” American Association for Cancer Research’s 2009 Science of Cancer Health Disparities, Carefree, Ariz., Feb. 3, 2009.
- Amelie G. Ramirez and Deborah Parra-Medina, IHPR. “The IHPR: Researching the Solutions to Better Health for All.” Regional Academic Health Center Research Symposium, Harlingen, Texas, Jan. 23, 2009.
- Luis F. Velez, IHPR. “A National Peer Educator Patient Navigation

Program for Latino Breast Cancer Patients.” NIH Summit: The Science of Eliminating Health Disparities, National Harbor, Md., Dec. 16-18, 2008.

- Luis F. Velez, IHPR. “Cigarette and Alcohol use Among Young Latino Workers.” NIH Summit: The Science of Eliminating Health Disparities, National Harbor, Md., Dec. 16-18, 2008.

IHPR’s *Salud America!* network receives more than 80 proposal applications

The IHPR-directed *Salud America!* program, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) Research Network to Prevent Obesity Among Latino Children, received more than 80 proposals in response to a call for pilot research proposals that address Latino childhood obesity. Through *Salud America!*, RWJF will fund up to 20 pilot grants, each up to \$75,000 for two years. Finalists will be notified April 15, 2009. Visit the *Salud America!* Web site [here](#).



IHPR program reaches out to medically underserved children in South Texas

A new program at the Institute for Health Promotion Research (IHPR) at The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio seeks to bring more Hispanic children from the Lower Rio Grande Valley into clinical trials for leukemia, helping this underserved population get cutting-edge therapies.

Funded by a \$100,000 grant from the National Cancer Institute, the program will place a “patient navigator” at the Health Science Center’s Regional Academic Health Center (RAHC) in Harlingen starting in 2009.

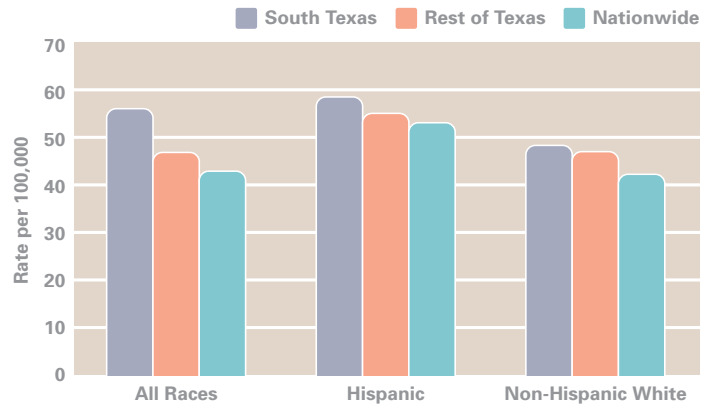
The navigator, Cynthia Wittenburg of the IHPR, will make patients’ families and physicians aware of clinical trials and help overcome barriers to participating in them.

Amelie G. Ramirez, Dr.PH., the study’s principal investigator and director of the IHPR, anticipates the effort could increase recruitment rates by 20 percent.

The importance of having children from this medically underserved population represented in clinical trials is twofold. First, clinical trials often use cutting-edge therapies, and it’s important that all children have access to them. Also, researchers need to evaluate how these treatments affect different populations.

Hispanic children are at slightly higher risk of developing leukemia than non-Hispanics, and [previous research](#) by Dr. Ramirez indicates that children in South Texas are at greater risk of developing leukemia than their peers statewide or nationally.

“There is little knowledge about the risk factors for childhood and adolescent leukemia, and participation in clinical trials by disadvantaged



This chart from the IHPR’s *South Texas Health Status Review* shows the age-adjusted incidence of child and adolescent leukemia by location, which is much higher among South Texas Hispanics than whites in the region, state, or nation.

populations and groups with higher incidence is critical,” Dr. Ramirez said. “The Latino population is being underrepresented in a number of research studies.”

The new grant, a one-year project administered through Dr. Ramirez’ *Redes En Acción*: The National Latino Cancer Research [Network](#), could be extended if results appear promising. Luis Velez, M.D., Ph.D., assistant professor at the IHPR, and Anne-Marie Langevin, M.D., associate professor of pediatrics at the Health Science Center, also are heavily involved in the project.

IHPR News Briefs

IHPR welcomes new employee to its satellite office in the Valley

The IHPR has added Cynthia Wittenburg as its Research Study Coordinator at its satellite office at the Regional Academic Health Center in the Lower Rio Grande Valley. Wittenburg will serve as the IHPR’s patient navigator in the Valley. Wittenburg previously was an adjunct professor and coordinator for student health education at The University of Texas at Brownsville, where she worked to develop effective health education programming for the student body. This included provision of nutrition/diet analysis, exercise prescriptions, successful weight management, STD awareness, drug and alcohol education and counseling, and health fairs. She has a master’s degree in health education from the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque, N.M., and a bachelor’s degree in exercise science from The University of Texas at El Paso.



Cynthia Wittenburg

IHPR advisory board member accepts new role

Dr. Lucina Suarez, a member of the IHPR External National Advisory Board, has taken a new role as the section director for the Environmental Epidemiology and Disease Registries Section of the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS). Dr. Suarez graduated from the University of Texas at Arlington with a mathematics degree, the University of Pittsburgh with a master’s degree in biostatistics, and from the University of Texas Health Science Center, Houston, School of Public Health with a Ph.D. in epidemiology. She began her career with DSHS in 1983 and has served in various capacities within the epidemiology field.

Report suggests Texas obesity rate will increase 40 percent by 2040

A new report projects that more than 40 percent of Texas adults will be obese by 2040, representing a nearly three-fold increase over current figures, the *Austin American-Statesman* reports.

The report, created by State Demographer Dr. Karl Eschbach and released by the Texas Health Institute and Methodist Healthcare Ministries of South Texas, is based on an analysis of population trends and adult obesity rates across a 35-year period.

According to the data, more than 15 million Texans will be obese by 2040, with rates expected to be highest among individuals living along the border and in rural areas.

In addition, the report notes that the obesity rate among young adults in Texas is rapidly increasing, climbing steadily from 10 percent to 20 percent during the last seven years.

Report authors suggest the data projections should be used to help plan future community-level obesity prevention efforts and inform future policy reform aimed at stemming the obesity epidemic. According to the *American-Statesman*, Texas Gov. Rick Perry has encouraged lawmakers to address obesity through an incentive-based fitness program targeted toward children in the state.



Dr. Karl Eschbach

RAHC Corner



RAHC hosts clinical research symposium

The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio is laying the groundwork for a thriving research community in the Lower Rio Grande Valley, and its efforts were on display at a gathering Jan. 23-24, 2009, in Harlingen.

The Regional Academic Health Center (RAHC) Clinical Research Symposium brought together faculty from Harlingen and San Antonio to discuss how clinical research can be used to improve the health of Valley residents.

“Our research efforts are focused on diseases that afflict the population here,” said Leonel Vela, M.D., M.P.H., regional dean of the RAHC, who spoke at the symposium.

Clinical research, which addresses problems at the patient and population levels, is distinct from the basic science research under way at the RAHC’s Medical Research Division in Edinburg, which seeks answers at the chemical and molecular levels.

The symposium coincided with a push by the RAHC, which has been in existence for seven years, to expand its

clinical research capabilities. Evidence of that will be visible this spring.

A clinical research unit is about to open in the recently completed second building on the RAHC’s Harlingen campus. A state-of-the-art 3-Tesla magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) system being installed there by the South Texas Veterans Health Care System will be available for research as well as for diagnostic testing.

The clinical research unit receives support from the Health Science Center’s Institute for Integration of Medicine and Science (IIMS), which offers instruction in clinical and translational research. Translational research bridges basic science with clinical research, taking findings from the laboratory and incorporating them into the care of individuals and the community.

“We hope to encourage and facilitate more clinical research, especially studies related to health problems that are prevalent in the region,” said IIMS Director Robert A. Clark, M.D., MACP, who spoke at the symposium.

Another opportunity for clinical research comes in the form of the National Children’s Study, which will follow 100,000 children nationwide from before birth until age 21. The Health Science Center was awarded \$33 million to manage three of 105 study sites, including one in Hidalgo County. The RAHC will assist there.

Dr. Brad H. Pollock, who chairs the Health Science Center’s Department of



Dr. Leonel Vela

Epidemiology and Biostatistics, also gave a presentation. In addition to conducting its own research, Dr. Pollock’s department helps other researchers design studies. The department already has faculty at the RAHC and is looking to expand its presence with a soon-to-be-hired senior faculty coordinator.

Others speakers included Dr. Thomas Slaga, interim director for research at the RAHC’s Medical Research Division in Edinburg, Dr. Amelie G. Ramirez, director of the Health Science Center’s Institute for Health Promotion Research (IHPR), and Dr. Deborah Parra-Medina, IHPR researcher.

“The symposium showed the many benefits of the Regional Academic Health Center,” Dr. Ramirez said. “It is truly a place for trend-setting research that seeks to reduce diseases that have a disproportionate impact in this region.”

Report: Diabetes cases rising, especially among minorities

Diabetes and pre-diabetes is becoming increasingly more prevalent in the U.S., according to a *HealthDay News* report on a study in the February issue of *Diabetes Care*.

Researchers, analyzing national nutritional survey data from 2005-06, found that crude prevalence of diagnosed diabetes among people age 20 and older increased from 5.1 percent between 1988 and 1994 to 7.7 percent between 2005 and 2006.

“We can say for certain that diagnosed diabetes has increased significantly between the two surveys,” said Catherine C. Cowie, director of the Diabetes Epidemiology Program at the U.S. National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases.

“On the other hand, the prevalence of undiagnosed diabetes and pre-diabetes [around 30 percent of the population] is generally stable, and that’s really good news,” she said. “If undiagnosed diabetes has stayed pretty much the same and diagnosed diabetes has gone up, then we’re doing a better job of detecting diabetes.”

In addition, data showed that 40 percent of adults have hyperglycemic conditions that predispose them to developing full diabetes. Specifically, 13 percent of adults age 20 and older have been diagnosed with diabetes, while an additional 30 percent have pre-diabetes.

Diabetes

Diabetes is a serious disease that affects millions of U.S. Latinos. But there is good news: Diabetes can be prevented. By losing a modest amount of weight, getting 30 minutes of physical activity five days a week, and eating healthier, Latinos with pre-diabetes can delay or prevent the onset of the disease. The National Diabetes Education Program has a campaign, “*Prevengamos la diabetes tipo 2. Paso a Paso*,” that spreads this important message of hope to at-risk Hispanics/Latinos. All [campaign materials](#) are available in English and Spanish.



Such hyperglycemic conditions are most prevalent among minorities, with diabetes rates approximately twice as high for Mexican Americans as they are for non-Hispanic whites.

News Briefs

Study: Hispanics have lower levels of knowledge about HPV

A new study found that both Hispanic men and women had low levels of knowledge, significant misunderstandings, and cultural beliefs about the human papillomavirus (HPV) that may need to be addressed to decrease the risk of cervical cancer among this population, according to a [report](#) from the American Association for Cancer Research’s Conference on the Science of Cancer Health Disparities on Feb. 5. The study, by Dr. Maria E. Fernandez of the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, School of Public Health, conducted five focus groups in Brownsville, Texas.

Study: Minority women distrust medical system more

Minority women have more distrust of the medical system, which leads to delays in screening for breast cancer, according to a [study](#) presented by Michigan State University researchers at the American Association for Cancer Research’s Conference on the Science of Cancer Health Disparities on Feb. 5. More mistrust was tied to lower screening rates.

Study: Ancestry associated with higher risk of breast cancer among Latinas

Among U.S. Latinas, a greater degree of European genetic ancestry is associated with an increased risk of breast cancer, according to a new [study](#). This could be due to environmental factors, genetic factors, or the interplay of the two, the study team suggests.

Study: Genetics may impact lower breast cancer incidence rates among Latinas

Genetic factors may contribute to the lower incidence of breast cancer among U.S. Latina women compared with non-Latina white women, according to a new [study](#) in the journal *Cancer Research*. Researchers used genetic markers to estimate the ancestry of Latina breast cancer cases and controls and assessed the association with genetic ancestry, adjusting for reproductive and other risk factors.

Study: Changes in corn masa flour could boost folic acid intake in Hispanics

Fortification of corn masa flour products could increase folic acid intake by nearly 20 percent among Mexican Americans, who are at a 30-40 percent higher risk for a number of severe brain and spinal birth defects, according to a [study](#) in the January issue of the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*. Corn masa flour is used to make most corn tortillas and corn chips. Folic acid can prevent up to 70 percent of neural tube defects, of which Hispanics have higher prevalence rates.

Study: Screening education may require activities that increase access to health care

To be effective, cancer screening education interventions among Latina women of lower education levels may need to be accompanied by activities that facilitate the access to health care, according to an [article](#) in the *Journal of Community Health*.

Study: Gaps persist between Hispanics, whites in colorectal cancer screening

Colorectal cancer screening among patients with Medicare coverage is increasing, but a persistent gap remains between whites – who are screened most frequently – and all other racial and ethnic groups, according to a new [study](#) by researchers at UC Davis and the University of Washington.

The study also showed that the biggest gap is between whites and Hispanics.

Because Medicare covers all available colorectal cancer screening procedures, the research suggests that obstacles other than insurance coverage are responsible for disparities.

“We need more information about the barriers that different populations encounter when it comes to screening for colon cancer,” said Joshua Fenton of UC Davis, lead author of the study in the March issue of the *Journal of the American Geriatrics Society*. “The issue clearly is not lack of access to health insurance. Socioeconomic, cultural and language barriers are all possibilities, but understanding which of these barriers is relevant for which group is essential to narrowing the gaps.”

The study focused on a representative sample of nearly half a million patients ages 70-79 from four racial and

March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

ethnic groups: whites, blacks, Asians/Pacific Islanders and Hispanics. The data were compiled from a National Cancer Institute database that links Medicare claims with clinical information on cancer patients throughout the U.S.

Researchers found that the percentage of patients with up-to-date colorectal cancer screenings rose for all groups from 1995 to 2003 (from 24 percent to 33 percent for Hispanics). Medicare started covering colorectal cancer screening in 1998. Nevertheless, the gaps between whites and other racial and ethnic groups have not narrowed.

The persistence of racial and ethnic disparities in screening points to the need for new research to elucidate why the disparities continue. Fenton added that the study indicates the need for more outreach to encourage screening overall.

Colorectal cancer and Latinos

Colorectal cancer is the second-most commonly diagnosed cancer among Hispanic men and women. Colon and rectal cancer was the second-leading site of new cancer cases among Hispanics (11 percent among men and 9 percent among women), according to statistics from the American Cancer Society.

Colorectal cancer can be treated if caught early. However, Latinos are more likely to be diagnosed at an advanced stage of the disease compared to non-Hispanic whites, and they have a lower probability of survival after diagnosis, likely due to lower use of colorectal cancer screening and less access to timely and high-quality treatment.

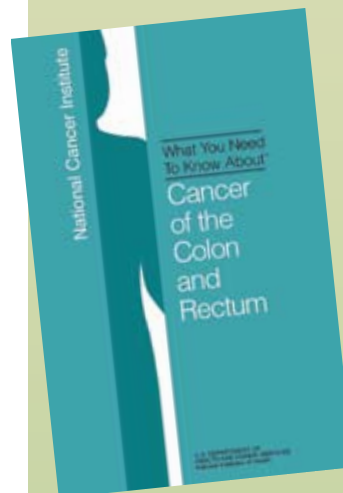
The American Cancer Society recommends that screening for colorectal cancer begin at age 50 in people with no symptoms of colorectal cancer and no unusual risk factors. People should talk to their doctor about starting colorectal cancer screening earlier and/or being screened more often if they have any of the following colorectal cancer risk factors:



- ▶ Age 50 or older
- ▶ The presence of colorectal polyps (growths on the inner wall of the colon or rectum, some of which can become cancer)
- ▶ Family history of colorectal cancer
- ▶ Personal history of cancer
- ▶ Ulcerative colitis or Crohn’s disease
- ▶ Diet high in fat and low in calcium, folate, and fiber
- ▶ Smoking

For more information, visit the [American Cancer Society](#).

Booklet: What You Need to Know about Cancer of the Colon and Rectum



The National Cancer Institute’s Cancer Information Service provides valuable information about colorectal cancer. Information is available online in English [here](#) or Spanish [here](#). NCI educational materials, such as *What You Need to Know about Cancer of the Colon and Rectum*, are available in English [here](#) and Spanish [here](#). To speak with a Cancer Information Specialist in English or Spanish, call 1-800-4-CANCER, Monday to Friday, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. local time.

Resources

Guide for hospital leaders to address health disparities

A new **report**, *Improving Quality and Achieving Equity: A Guide for Hospital Leaders*, presents the evidence for racial and ethnic disparities in health care, and provides the rationale for addressing them with a focus on quality, cost, risk management, and accreditation. The report is from the Disparities Solutions Center at Massachusetts General Hospital.

Preventative health guides for Spanish-speakers

Two new checklists are now available from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) and the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP) to help Spanish-speaking **men** and **women** ages 50 or older know which preventative medical tests they need and when they need to get them.

Campaign helps diabetic Hispanics enjoy traditional foods

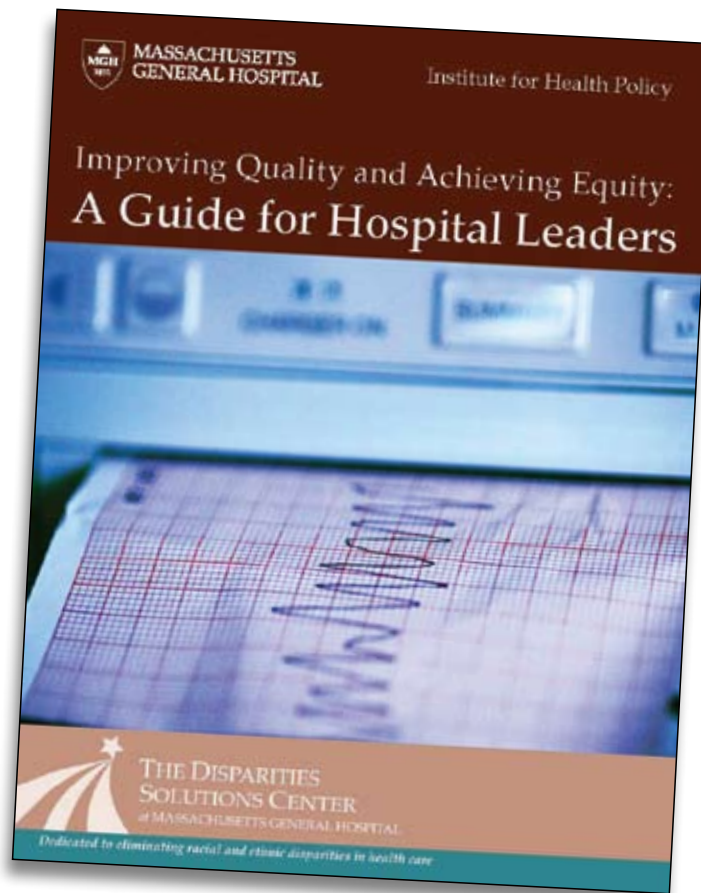
New tools are available to help Hispanics enjoy healthy versions of their favorite recipes and control portion sizes, all designed to reduce their risk of developing diabetes. The recipes and other materials are part of new National Diabetes Education Program **campaign** called “*Mas que comida, es vida*,” which means, “It’s more than food, it’s life.”

Latina breast cancer Web site

Living Beyond Breast Cancer offers a new **Web site** for Latinas affected by breast cancer. The site provides access in both English and Spanish to breast cancer news stories, information about clinical trials, and profiles of Latinas affected by breast cancer. The Web site also features a message board, and readers can download Spanish-language transcripts.

‘Improving Health Literacy’ guide

To address challenges associated with low health literacy, the Society for Public Health Education has developed a comprehensive resource **guide**, *Improving Health Literacy: Tips, Tools*



& *Resources for Health Educators*. The toolkit is designed specifically to aid health educators and health providers in identifying available resources.

NCI Spanish-language cancer resources

Now available to order are two new Spanish language education resources from the National Cancer Institute (NCI). The first is a **booklet** for cancer caregivers, and the **second** is about support for people with cancer. Both booklets are available to order from the Cancer Information Service at 1-800-4-CANCER.

Latinos in education fact book

Synthesizing national and public data, *The Condition of Latinos in Education 2008* **fact book** provides a snapshot of the educational progress, strengths, and areas of need for Latinos. The fact book was produced by *Excelencia* in Education, which aims to accelerate higher education success for Latino students.

A guide to provide culturally appropriate care

The National Quality Forum, which seeks to improve healthcare quality, has endorsed **45 practices** to guide healthcare systems in providing care that is culturally appropriate and patient-centered. The practices cover issues like communication, community engagement and workforce training, and provide healthcare systems with practices they can implement to help reduce persistent disparities.

Workbook on social determinants of health

A new **workbook**, *Promoting Health Equity: A Resource to Help Communities Address Social Determinants of Health*, was created to support new and existing partnerships to address the social determinants of health inequities. It highlights lessons learned by communities and provides information and tools to develop, implement and evaluate interventions that address social determinants of health inequities.

Funding

Research supplements to promote diversity

Limited to principal investigators holding specific types of NIH research grants, funds are available for administrative [supplements](#) to improve the diversity of the research work force by supporting and recruiting students, post-doctorates and eligible investigators from underrepresented groups. Administrative supplements must support work within the scope of the original project. Applications can be received at any time.

Komen scholarship for college-bound students

Susan G. Komen for the Cure is now accepting applications for its [College Scholarship Award Program](#). Up to seven undergraduate college scholarships of \$10,000 a year for up to four years will be offered to students who would otherwise face a significant financial burden to college attendance, due to the loss of a parent to breast cancer. The application deadline is March 20, 2009.

Ladder to Leadership Training Program

Ladder to Leadership: Developing the Next Generation of Community Health Leaders, a collaborative initiative of RWJF and the Center for Creative Leadership, seeks to develop critical leadership skills of 270 early- to mid-career professionals in community-based, nonprofit health organizations serving vulnerable populations through a 16-month curriculum. The [program](#) will be delivered in nine priority communities on a staggered schedule. The next opening is for Albuquerque, N.M., and is available from March 20 to May 15, 2009.

Investigator Awards in Health Policy Research

The RWJF Investigator Awards in Health Policy Research, a national program designed to support scholars whose projects can enhance policy to improve health or health care in the U.S., has issued a call for [applications](#). The program provides grants of up to \$335,000 for policy-relevant projects of up to four years to allow a scholar to devote considerable time to a project of greater scope than a usual R01 grant. The deadline for receipt of four-page letters of intent is March 25, 2009.

R21 grants on community participation research targeting the medically underserved

The NIH is soliciting applications ([here](#) and [here](#)) for research on health promotion, disease prevention and health disparities that is jointly conducted by communities and researchers and targets medically underserved areas and medically underserved populations. The letter of intent deadline is April 15, 2009.

NCI/NINR Behavioral Research Funding

A funding opportunity announcement issued by the National Cancer Institute (NCI) and the National Institute of Nursing Research (NINR) aims to support new investigators in cancer-related behavioral research or investigators who want to refocus their research interests toward behavioral research in cancer control. The research objectives of the [program](#) include health disparities research. Application deadlines start April 20, 2009.

Centers for Population Health and Health Disparities grant

The NCI and other agencies are jointly asking for [applications](#) for the Centers for Population Health and Health Disparities (CPHHD) program. The program is designed to promote transdisciplinary research in health inequities with the purpose of contributing directly to improved health outcomes and quality of life for populations with a higher disease burden. The deadline for a letter of intent is April 29, 2009.

National Institute of Mental Health research training program

The National Institute of Mental Health announces its support of the NIMH Career Opportunities in Research (COR) Honors Undergraduate Research Training Grant (T34) program. The goal of the [program](#) is to provide support for pre-baccalaureate research training to help ensure that a diverse and highly trained workforce can assume leadership roles related to the nation's research agenda for mental health. The deadline is May 12, 2009.

IHPR Recruiting Project Participants

The IHPR is seeking participants for two research projects. First, English- and Spanish-speaking male and female Hispanics between ages 25-45 who currently smoke cigarettes and are trying to quit or have recently quit smoking are needed to take part in an individual interview regarding tobacco use. Participants will have their story and photo published in a free bilingual magazine geared to reduce tobacco use among

Latinos. Participants will receive a \$50 HEB gift certificate. For details, contact Courtney Denton at dentonc2@uthscsa.edu. Also, Hispanic and non-Hispanic white women ages 30-64 at high risk for breast cancer are needed to take a 30-minute survey regarding breast cancer and genetic testing. Participants will receive a \$20 HEB gift certificate. For details, contact Sandra San Miguel at sanmiguels@uthscsa.edu.

Events

NHMA 13th Annual Conference

The National Hispanic Medical Association will conduct its 13th Annual Conference March 19-22, 2009, in Brooklyn, New York. The **conference** theme is *Building a Health Care Workforce for the Hispanic Community*. The conference brings together experts from across the country to share their experience in eliminating health disparities among Latinos.



1,800 professionals focused on the prevention of childhood obesity, is scheduled for June 9-12, 2009, at the Westin Bonaventure Hotel in Los Angeles. **Conference** attendees will discuss the most pressing and innovative issues related to childhood obesity. Early-bird conference registration ends May 8, 2009, and the deadline to apply for a poster presentation is April 1, 2009.

New England Science Symposium

The Harvard Medical School Minority Faculty Development Program and the Biomedical Science Careers Program (BSCP) will sponsor the eighth-annual **New England Science Symposium** on Friday, April 3, 2009, in Boston, Mass.

Survivorship teleconference series

A free, three-part teleconference series will focus on cancer survivorship. **CancerCare**, in collaboration with the National Cancer Institute, Lance Armstrong Foundation, Intercultural Cancer Council, Living Beyond Breast Cancer and National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship, will present *The Seventh Annual Cancer Survivorship Series: Living With, Through & Beyond Cancer*. The telephone education workshops will take place 1:30-2:30 p.m. ET April 14, May 19 and June 23, 2009. Pre-registration is required.

Health disparities conference

The Cancer Health Disparities Conference: Building Bridges to Improve Rural Health is set for May 27-29, 2009, at the Hotel Encanto in Las Cruces, N.M. Abstracts for the **conference** are due April 6, 2009.

Retreat for San Antonio cancer survivors, caregivers

The Surviving and Thriving Retreat, sponsored by the Wellness Center at the Cancer Therapy & Research Center at The University of Texas Health Science Center and Citi, is set for April 17-19, 2009, at the Y.O. Ranch Resort and Conference Center in Kerrville, Texas. The **event** is for cancer survivors and caregivers. The registration deadline is March 27, 2009.

Childhood obesity conference

The 5th biennial Childhood Obesity Conference, a gathering of more than

Weight of the Nation conference

On July 27-29, 2009, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity will host its inaugural **conference** on obesity prevention and control, Weight of the Nation, at the Omni Shoreham Hotel, Washington, D.C. Weight of the Nation is designed to provide a forum to highlight progress in the prevention and control of obesity through policy and environmental strategies and is framed around four intervention settings: community, medical care, school, and workplace.

Summer institute in San Antonio

The 2009 Summer Institute on Evidence-Based Practice, *Achieving Excellence with Evidence*, is set for July 9-11, 2009, in San Antonio. The **institute** prepares healthcare providers from multiple disciplines for an increasing role in evidence-based practice to improve healthcare. Abstracts are due March 9, 2009.

About the E-newsletter

This E-newsletter is produced quarterly by the Institute for Health Promotion Research. Please send news items or story ideas to IHPR@uthscsa.edu.

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