Latinas needed for sister cancer study

Researchers are encouraging Latinas and other underserved populations to join the Sister Study, a national research project examining breast cancer risk factors.

The Sister Study, conducted by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), is an environmental and genetic cancer study of breast cancer. The goal of the study is to help identify breast cancer risk factors.

The study seeks to test whether certain environmental factors can cause breast cancer. Researchers are interested in the role of breast cancer risk factors such as environmental exposures, lifestyle factors, genetics and other factors. The study also aims to learn more about how these factors interact with one another.

Recruitment is ongoing for this study. To date, about 3,000 women have been recruited, but more are still needed. The goal is to recruit at least 10,000 participants.

For more information about the Sister Study, visit www.sisterstudy.org or call toll free 1-877-4SISTER (877-474-7837).

The National Cancer Institute (NCI), in collaboration with the National Institutes of Health (NIH), has established a network of Special Populations Networks (SPN) to improve cancer research and control for diverse populations.

The Redes En Acción: The National Hispanic/Latino Cancer Network is a major Special Populations Networks initiative supported by the National Cancer Institute.

A major sponsor of the annual meeting, the Sister Study is a landmark project that will follow 10,000 women over 10 years to determine their risk of breast cancer.

In collaboration with the Cancer Information Service; Diana D. Jeffery, MD; William J. Kaelin, Jr., MD; Aida L. Giachello, PhD; Elena Rios, MD, MSPH; Eliseo J. Pérez-Stable, MD; Martha A. Medrano, MD, MPH; and the Redes En Acción: The National Hispanic/Latino Cancer Network, will continue to provide support and resources to the network as it grows and evolves over the next 10 years.


Bilingual phone line helps smokers quit

A new bilingual telephone counseling service for Spanish speakers is helping to increase smoking cessation rates in Texas.

The program, called ¡Adiós al Fumar!, also evaluated the efficacy of various media approaches to increase Spanish-language smoking cessation rates in Texas.

For more information about Spanish smoking cessation resources, visit www.sisterstudy.org or call toll free 1-877-4SISTER (877-474-7837).
Redes En Acción's 5th Anniversary: Regional Coordinators look back

Nerilda Borrero, MSN
Northeast Region

As the Program Coordinator in New York, I have the opportunity to reach thousands of people in this area with messages of cancer prevention. I have also had the opportunity to serve as a Program Coordinator at the Community Health Worker Professional Partnerships. Perhaps the most challenging part of my role is to identify, support, train, and maintain a network of community health education and intervention workers. Our network of health educators and health navigators is a core component within our Regional Network. We refer to them as our “Redes” who bridge the gap between the health care system and the community. We strive to understand and design culturally competent cancer education messages. The augmentation of the community health worker workforce is a top priority. Funding initiatives, education and capacity building are all factors in the development of culturally competent professionals who are working to improve the health care of all people is possible.”

Dr. Borrero has provided me with the opportunity to develop creative, engaging and self-sustaining projects that can be scaled up to support multiple number of communities. Through Redes En Acción, I have been able to continuously work on several advocacy, education, knowledge and skills building initiatives. Redes En Acción’s Regional Coordinator model has provided me the opportunity to work with doctors who clearly have a great deal of influence with their patients, health care delivery places where Latinos are well known within the Latino community. It has provided me with the knowledge is clear when they request our feedback from community- and faith-based organizations we’ve conducted presentations and trainings with; their thirst for information and encouragement. Finally, I hope our work will grow strong with time. I am very thankful for the support and commitment of the Redes En Acción’s leadership and staff who have been instrumental in supporting our work. Redes En Acción has provided me the opportunity to be a part of this important work.

Sylvia Z. Castillo
North Central Region

Dr. Castillo has provided me with the opportunity to go to the community and work with them to meet their needs. One of the things I think the most important for cancer prevention and future research is having a better understanding of the importance of cancer prevention and their experience. As a primary care clinician and a member of the community research organization we’ve conducted presentations and trainings with; their thirst for information and encouragement. Finally, I hope our work will grow strong with time. I am very thankful for the support and commitment of the Redes En Acción’s leadership and staff who have been instrumental in supporting our work. Redes En Acción has provided me the opportunity to be a part of this important work. Dr. Castillo has provided me with the opportunity to develop creative, engaging and self-sustaining projects that can be scaled up to support multiple number of communities. Through Redes En Acción, I have been able to continuously work on several advocacy, education, knowledge and skills building initiatives.

Marcha Rangel-Logu, PhD
Northeast Region

A native of Michoacán, Mexico, Marcha Rangel-Logu has spent most of her career at the Center for Behavioral and Community Health Studies (CBCHS) at the University of California, San Francisco since 1998. She first joined CBCHS as a Research Scientist in 2000 to lead the development of the San Francisco Community Cancer Collaborative (SFCCC). For the past 5 years, Marcha has served as the Director of the Center for Behavioral and Community Health Studies at the University of California, San Francisco and continues her work with leadership and epidemiology.

Redes En Acción 2000–2005

Marcha Rangel-Logu

Academic Director

In the process of collecting the data for the project, I have been fortunate enough to work with doctors who clearly have a great deal of influence with their patients, health care delivery places where Latinos are well known within the Latino community. It has provided me with the knowledge is clear when they request our feedback from community- and faith-based organizations we’ve conducted presentations and trainings with; their thirst for information and encouragement. Finally, I hope our work will grow strong with time. I am very thankful for the support and commitment of the Redes En Acción’s leadership and staff who have been instrumental in supporting our work. Redes En Acción has provided me the opportunity to be a part of this important work. Dr. Castillo has provided me with the opportunity to develop creative, engaging and self-sustaining projects that can be scaled up to support multiple number of communities. Through Redes En Acción, I have been able to continuously work on several advocacy, education, knowledge and skills building initiatives. The augmentation of the community health worker workforce is a top priority. Funding initiatives, education and capacity building are all factors in the development of culturally competent professionals who are working to improve the health care of all people is possible.”

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Evelyn Rojas, MSW
Brooklyn, New York

“Partnering with multiple cancer and health organizations to explore collaborative relationships with community-based primary care practices has been a rewarding aspect of my career work,” Dr. Rojas said. “These efforts have strengthened the knowledge and understanding of the needs of the population served, and some Latinos prefer not to receive health educational material in Spanish at a literacy level appropriate to their own roots. I am constantly challenging myself to improve my Spanish skills so that I can be more effective in providing culturally and linguistically appropriate health messages.”

Dr. Rojas has also provided valuable resources and networking opportunities to community organizations. “The need to provide these resources is vital across all sectors for Latinos,” she said. “In the past, my work has involved multiple sectors and has been focused on providing key messages in Spanish to educate community organizations about the importance of cancer prevention and awareness messages.”

Dr. Rojas is currently the Program Coordinator of the Northeast Region for the Center for Urban Research in Primary Care (CURE PC) at the University of Puerto Rico. She is also a joint project of the University of Puerto Rico with a BS in Biology. She received a master’s degree in nursing with a major in Community Health Nursing from the University of Puerto Rico with a Master’s in Public Health from Florida International University. She has been a member of the Center’s research team since 2000 and has helped co-create a cancer support group in Puerto Rico with a major in Public Health Nursing. She has also provided leadership in the development of educational programs for the population served. She has served as a mentor to many new cancer researchers and is currently working with trainees and mentors to improve the health care of people who speak Spanish.
In her.StringVar (text) of the Department of Family and Community Medicine at the University of Puerto Rico with a BS in Biology. She obtained her MS in health promotion education awarded by the School of HPER, Indiana University. She was born in San Juan, Puerto Rico, where she obtained an MPH with a major in epidemiology at the Puerto Rico Health Sciences Center at the University of Puerto Rico. She is also a Certified Health Educator Specialist (CHES).

Ana Talavera, MPH

As the Program Coordinator for the Center for Behavioral and Community Health Studies at the Miller School of Medicine, Ana Talavera, MPH, has provided me with the necessary professional and personal infrastructure has involved considerable effort and resources. The augmentation of the necessary professional staff to implement its community- and faith-based outreach programs has been particularly rewarding when I hear feedback from community- and faith-based researchers. The three main goals of Redes En Acción are to increase minority participation in research, to foster mentoring and leadership opportunities for Hispanic junior faculty, and to encourage them to train new researchers in the benefit of significantly expanding my professional and personal network. Experience has suggested that is a better leader and communicator than 10 years ago. It has provided me with the experience and contacts required to guide researchers.
Latinas needed for sister cancer study

Researchers are encouraging Latinas and women in other underserved populations to join the Sister Study, a national research project exploring the determinants of breast cancer.

The Sister Study is conducted by the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), part of the National Institutes of Health, in collaboration with the National Cancer Institute (NCI). The project is investigating environmental and genetic causes of breast cancer.

Amelia G. Ramirez, DrPH, Co-Principal Investigator, conducted the Sister Study, has found that the number of cases has grown as the study has expanded.

According to Ramirez, the study’s nationwide recruitment is aimed at increasing access to cancer care among women of diverse ages, races, and ethnicities.

The study is currently enrolling participants in various phases, including the baseline phase, which involves collecting demographic, personal, and family history data. In addition, participants are invited to take part in follow-up assessments to track changes in their health status.

The study is seeking women aged 35-74 who have not been diagnosed with breast cancer or who have a healthy female relative and who are not taking hormone therapy.

The Sister Study is the largest study of its kind to look at the causes of breast cancer. It is expected to be completed in 2025.

The study is supported by the National Cancer Institute, National Institutes of Health, and the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences.

If you are interested in participating, you can call 1-877-4SISTER or visit the study’s website at http://www.sisterstudy.org.

Free phone workshops offered to survivors

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) is offering free phone workshops to help cancer survivors and their families learn about coping with cancer and related issues.

The workshops focus on various topics, including managing side effects, adjusting to life after treatment, and navigating the healthcare system.

Participants can register for the workshops by calling 1-800-4-CANCER or visiting the NCI website at http://www.cancer.gov.

Clariﬁng clinical trial participation barriers

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) has launched a new program to increase minority participation in cancer clinical trials and studies.

The program, called The Redes Report, is designed to address the barriers to participation among underserved communities.

The report highlights the importance of increasing minority participation in cancer clinical trials and studies, and provides strategies and recommendations to overcome these barriers.

Clarifying clinical trial participation barriers

Ana Maria Lopez, MD, MPH, FACP
Tucson, Arizona

I n the United States, underserved minority communities experience higher rates of cancer than other populations. Despite advances in research and medical advancements, cancer disparities persist. Several factors contribute to under-representation in cancer clinical trials, including health care access, language barriers, lack of knowledge about clinical trials, and health literacy. In addition, the term “underserved” is commonly used to describe individuals who may not have access to basic health care services, but other definitions include people with language barriers, or socioeconomic factors, or any combination of these. In this review article, we discuss the impact of these factors in the context of Latinas, and we highlight the Latinas for the Cancer Study (La Estudio de las Latinas), an ongoing research project that aims to fill the gap of representation in cancer clinical trial participation among Latinas in the United States.

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