

Prostate cancer: Racial disparity gap narrows, men diagnosed at younger age

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The racial disparity in prostate cancer stage at diagnosis has decreased statistically significantly over time, according to a brief communication published online August 27 in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*.

By analyzing data from the Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results (SEER) program, Grace L. Lu-Yao, Ph.D., of The Cancer Institute of New Jersey and the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey in New Brunswick, and colleagues also found that more men were diagnosed with [prostate cancer](#) at a younger age and earlier stage in 2004 than in earlier years.

The researchers used SEER data to generate a contemporary profile of prostate cancer patients by comparing patient characteristics of a 2004 population with those of patients diagnosed in 1988 and 1996. They also compared the characteristics of the 2004 patient population with those of participants in a randomized trial of radical [prostatectomy](#) versus watchful waiting that showed better survival for patients aged 65 years or younger in the radical prostatectomy group.

According to the study, incidence of stage T3 or T4 cancer at diagnosis has decreased in both blacks and whites, and the racial disparity in cancer state at diagnosis has decreased over time. Compared with patients in the trial, patients in the SEER population had a lower prostate-specific antigen level and earlier stage cancer at diagnosis.

"It will be important to examine whether more patients being diagnosed at earlier stages ultimately results in a decreased mortality from this highly prevalent malignancy and whether the narrowing of the racial disparity in the presentation of advanced prostate cancer is ultimately accompanied by similar trend in mortality," the authors write.

Source: [Journal of the National Cancer Institute](#) (news : web)

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