

Demographic variation in early PET scan use for NSCLC

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For Medicare beneficiaries with non-small-cell lung cancer, demographic differences in the rates of positron emission tomography scan use persisted from 1998 to 2007, according to research published in the June issue of *Radiology*.

(HealthDay)—For Medicare beneficiaries with non-small-cell lung cancer (NSCLC), demographic differences in the rates of positron emission tomography (PET) scan use persisted from 1998 to 2007, according to research published in the June issue of *Radiology*.

Michaela A. Dinan, Ph.D., from the Duke University Research Institute in Durham, N.C., and colleagues retrospectively analyzed Surveillance, Epidemiology and End Results [Medicare data](#) for 46,544 [Medicare beneficiaries](#) diagnosed with NSCLC (46,935 cases) between 1998 and 2007. Change in the number of PET examinations two months before to four months after diagnosis was the primary outcome measured.

The researchers found that, regardless of demographic subgroup, more than half of patients underwent one or more PET examinations by 2005. Patients who underwent PET were significantly more likely to be married, non-black, younger than 80 years, and to live in the Northeast or in census tracts with higher education levels, in multivariate analysis. Initially, living within 40 miles of a PET facility was significantly associated with undergoing PET, but by 2007, this association had disappeared. More rapid increases in imaging were seen among patients who were non-black, younger than 81 years, and who lived in the Northeast and South.

"[PET imaging](#) among Medicare beneficiaries with NSCLC was initially concentrated among non-black patients younger than 81 years," the authors write. "Despite widespread adoption among all subgroups, differences within demographic subgroups remained."

Several authors disclosed financial ties to the biopharmaceutical and technology industries.

More information: [Abstract](#)
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