

Cancer biggest killer of Hispanic Texans

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More Hispanic Texans die from cancer than any other cause, according to a new report by the Comparative Effectiveness Research on Cancer in Texas research group.

The report documents cancer as the leading cause of death among Hispanic Texans under the age of 76. Only three percent of Hispanic Texans are older than 75.

Texas's Hispanic population has more than doubled since 1990. Texans of Hispanic ethnicity now comprise 38 percent of the state's population.

The findings are published in a September 2013 special issue of the *Texas Public Health Journal*, available online at <http://txcercit.org/>.

Based on data from the Texas Cancer Registry, Medicare claims records and state vital statistics, researchers compared rates and trends for cancer in Hispanics to those for non-Hispanic whites in Texas. Key findings include:

- Hispanic Texans are less likely to be screened for breast or colon cancer.
- Hispanics have lower rates of new cancer diagnoses for breast, colon and lung cancer.
- Of the cancers diagnosed in Hispanics, fewer were in the earliest, most treatable stages – those typically detected through screening. Breast cancer at the most advanced stage was diagnosed at a 12 percent higher rate.

- Cancers more common among Hispanics were stomach and liver cancer in men and stomach, liver and cervical cancer in women. Such cancers can arise from untreated infections.
- Overall mortality from all cancer was lower among Hispanics with the exception of stomach and [liver cancer](#).
- Survival after a diagnosis of cancer is superior for Hispanics compared to non-Hispanic whites.

These findings were based on 10 years of data about the diagnoses of new cancer cases and 21 years of data about cancer deaths.

The CERCIT researchers noted one puzzling contradiction. Even though cancers tend to be more advanced when diagnosed in Hispanics, death rates were lower than in the white population. This phenomenon, known as the Hispanic Paradox, has been noted before by other researchers looking at disease and survival rates across the spectrum. Hispanic Americans tend to survive illness and live longer than white Americans with the same diseases even though the Hispanics have less education, income and access to health care.

Foreign-born Hispanics had lower mortality rates than those born in the United States, according to analyses of regional differences within the state.

The multidisciplinary consortium of CERCIT investigators works on issues related to cancer screening, cancer treatment, post-treatment surveillance and supportive care for [cancer](#) patients and survivors. CERCIT is funded by the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas.

The CERCIT project is led by principal investigator Dr. James S. Goodwin of University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston and co-principal investigator Dr. Linda S. Elting of the University of Texas MD

Anderson Cancer Center. Other project and core lead investigators include Drs. Catherine D. Cooksley, Anthony DiNuzzo, Karl Eschbach, Jean Freeman and Taylor S. Riall of UTMB; Dr. Sharon H. Giordano of MDA; Dr. Vivian Ho of Rice University and Dr. Melanie Williams of the Texas Cancer Registry.

Provided by University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston

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