

Hispanic women who identify as white are healthier than those who don't

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Hispanic women who identify as Black or another race have worse functional health than their counterparts who identify as White, according to new research. Out today, this research is part of a new special issue of *Research on Aging* (ROA, a journal from SAGE Publishing) focused on aging and health among Hispanic populations in the United States and in Latin America.

Looking at data from 42,908 U.S. Hispanic women, ages 18-85, from 1997 to 2011, Chinn and Hummer examined the relationship between race and certain functional limitations related to the body—inabilities or difficulties in performing [daily activities](#) such as bending or kneeling, walking a quarter mile, grasping objects, etc. The researchers found that:

- Among those born in the U.S., Hispanic women who identify as Black have a 31% higher rate of functional limitations than those who identify as White while those who identify as other races have a 22% higher rate of functional limitations.
- Among the women born outside of the U.S., Hispanic women who identify as White have a 1.5 % lower rate of functional limitations relative to other race Hispanic women and a 2.6% lower rate of functional limitations relative to Hispanic women who identify as Black Hispanic, despite different geographic or socioeconomic conditions.
- Over 25% of the U.S.-born Hispanic women who identify as Black reported living below the poverty line while about 16% of U.S.-born Hispanic women who identify as White or other races

reported living in poverty.

- U.S.-born Hispanic women living below the poverty level had a 74% higher rate of functional limitations compared to Hispanic women not living in poverty.

Chinn and Hummer continued, "Racial identity—or at least the distinction between identifying as Black or White—may have particular salience for the health of Hispanic adults among the second and higher generations. One strong possibility for this is that U.S.-born Black Hispanics simply have greater exposure to the harsh reality of being Black in American society than foreign-born Black Hispanics."

More information: "Racial Disparities in Functional Limitations Among Hispanic Women in the United States" *Research on Aging*, 2016.

Provided by SAGE

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