

New survey reveals Hispanic-Americans' attitudes toward health

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Credit: American Heart Association

Hispanic-Americans are less likely to seek health screenings or preventive care compared with their black and white peers, according to a new survey that provides a detailed and ongoing assessment of the Hispanic community's attitudes toward health care.

The [Healthy Americas Survey](#), released Tuesday by the National Alliance for Hispanic Health and the University of Southern California, shows that 68 percent of blacks are vigilant about getting health

screenings and checkups, compared with 60 percent of whites and 55 percent of Hispanics.

"This is dangerous for the long-term health of U.S. Latinos," said Amelie G. Ramirez, Dr.P.H., a health disparities researcher at UT Health Science Center in San Antonio, Texas. "We need increased educational interventions, a more diversified [health care](#) workforce, and great access to [health care coverage](#) [for Latinos]."

In the survey, Hispanic-Americans were more likely than black and white people Americans to say they don't have significant control over their health, although the report doesn't address why.

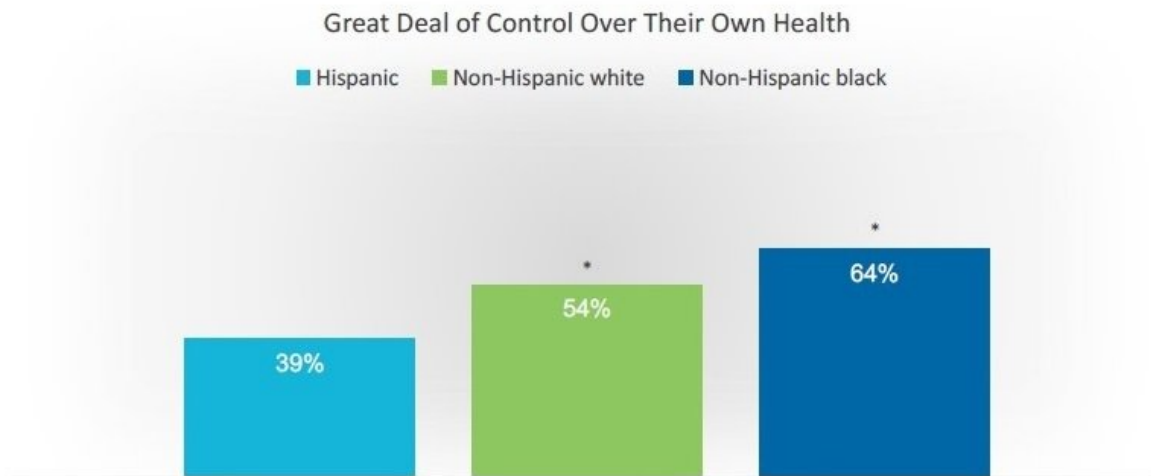
Jane L. Delgado, Ph.D., president and CEO of the Washington, D.C.-based National Alliance for Hispanic Health, said she hopes [public health officials](#) pay attention to the survey results because "people are doing all they can to stay healthy, but they need help from them."

Among the 869 American adults who participated in telephone interviews between Sept. 15 and Oct. 1, about a third were Hispanics of any race. The statistics indicate Hispanic participants were much less likely to have a college education. About a quarter said they earned more than \$50,000 a year, compared with 47 percent of whites and 30 percent of blacks.

The survey questions addressed a variety of health topics, including nutrition, individual health and community health.

Control Over Own Health

Just over a third of Hispanics feel they have a "great deal" of control over their own health, compared to more than half of non-Hispanic whites and almost two-thirds of non-Hispanic blacks.



In assessing lifestyle habits, black Americans were more likely to say they were making a significant effort to maintain or improve their health—79 percent—compared with 69 percent of Hispanics and whites.

Hispanics and blacks Americans were more likely than whites to say they were trying to limit portion sizes and working hard to reach or maintain a healthy weight. Yet most participants said they ate less than the recommended five servings of fruits and vegetables a day. Hispanics were more likely to say the cost of fruits and vegetables prevented them from buying the produce cost they couldn't regularly buy fruits and vegetables during the past year.

When it came to health care, fewer Hispanics thought access to affordable care had a strong impact on health: 67 percent compared with

more than three-quarters of whites and blacks.

Considering that U.S. Census estimates project that Hispanics will represent more than a quarter of Americans by 2060, the new survey provides important insights about the country's largest ethnic group, said Eduardo Sanchez, M.D., chief medical officer for prevention at the American Heart Association.

For instance, beyond the assessments of their own health, the survey suggests "Latinos' health is affected by insurance status and cost concerns," he said.

Indeed, Hispanics with health insurance are more likely than uninsured Hispanics to report that their [health](#) is excellent or very good—53 percent versus 37 percent. Plus, both Hispanic and black participants were significantly more likely than white participants to report that cost prevented them from getting prescription medicines or seeing a doctor.

The numbers also show most [survey](#) participants said the government should do more to help people become healthier—even if it costs taxpayers more money.

In addition, the results show that Hispanic-Americans were much more likely to support taxes on beverages with added sugar. More Hispanic participants also supported increasing the price of cigarettes to reduce smoking.

Provided by American Heart Association

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