

Effect of religiosity/spirituality on ovarian cancer diagnosis in African American women

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An examination of data from a multi-center case-control study of ovarian cancer in African American women found that women who reported higher levels of religiosity/spirituality had increased odds of stage III-IV ovarian cancer at diagnosis. Agreement with cultural/folk belief statements related to cancer was not associated with cancer stage at diagnosis. The full study findings are described in an article published in *Journal of Women's Health*.

In the article, entitled "Effect of Cultural, Folk, and Religious Beliefs and Practices on Delays in Diagnosis in Ovarian Cancer in African American Women," the researchers examined whether specific cultural/folk beliefs, religious practices, and perceived spirituality were associated with delays in diagnosis of [ovarian cancer](#) as indicated by later [cancer](#) stage at diagnosis or longer symptom duration before diagnosis. Cultural/folk beliefs and religiosity/spirituality were not associated consistently with symptom duration before diagnosis.

Patricia G. Moorman, Ph.D., Duke University (Durham, NC) coauthored the article with colleagues from the University of South Carolina (Columbia), Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey (New Brunswick), Case Western Reserve University (Cleveland, OH), Baylor College of Medicine (Houston, TX), Wayne State University (Detroit, MI), University of Alabama-Birmingham, Medical University of South Carolina (Charleston), Moffitt Cancer Center (Tampa, FL), University of Virginia (Charlottesville), Louisiana State University (New Orleans), Hunter Holmes McGuire Veterans Affairs Medical Center (Richmond, VA), and the University of Tennessee (Knoxville).

"Although cultural/folk beliefs related to cancer were not associated with cancer stage in this study, Dr. Moorman and colleagues found that these beliefs were prevalent among the women and may have influenced their decisions to seek treatment for cancer," states Susan G. Kornstein, MD, Editor-in-Chief of *Journal of Women's Health* and Executive Director of

the Virginia Commonwealth University Institute for Women's Health, Richmond, VA. "Increasing awareness among physicians about cultural and folk beliefs related to cancer, improving patient-provider communication about these beliefs, and involving churches in health education interventions may lead to better outcomes."

More information: Patricia G. Moorman et al, Effect of Cultural, Folk, and Religious Beliefs and Practices on Delays in Diagnosis of Ovarian Cancer in African American Women, *Journal of Women's Health* (2018). [DOI: 10.1089/jwh.2018.7031](https://doi.org/10.1089/jwh.2018.7031)

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