Racial disparities seen in PET/CT imaging for lung cancer

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(HealthDay)—Black and Hispanic patients are less likely to undergo

guideline-recommended imaging at diagnosis of non-small cell lung cancer, according to a study recently published in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*.

Rustain L. Morgan, M.D., from the University of Colorado in Denver, and colleagues used the Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results-Medicare database (2007 to 2015) to compare initial imaging modalities for patients with lung cancer. The analysis included 28,881 non-Hispanic White, 3,123 Black, and 1,907 Hispanic patients (aged, ≥66 years) who were enrolled in Medicare fee-for-service.

The researchers found that after adjusting for demographic, community, and facility characteristics, Black patients were less likely to undergo positron emission tomography/computed tomography (PET/CT) imaging at diagnosis compared with non-Hispanic White patients (odds ratio, 0.54). Similar findings were seen for Hispanic patients (odds ratio, 0.72). Survival was significantly improved with PET/CT imaging (hazard ratio, 0.61).

"If African-Americans and Hispanics aren't getting the best imaging, this could be a piece of the puzzle explaining why these patients with lung cancer tend to have worse outcomes than White patients," Morgan said in a statement.

One author disclosed financial ties to AstraZeneca.

 More information: Abstract/Full Text (subscription or payment may be required)

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