

# Undocumented Latinx patients got COVID-19 vaccine at same rate as US citizens, study finds

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For undocumented Latinx patients who sought care in the emergency room during the pandemic, the reported rate of having received the COVID-19 vaccine was found to be the same as U.S. citizens, a new UCLA Health [study](#) found.

These findings appearing in *JAMA Network Open*, surprised researchers, given that COVID-19 disproportionately affected the Latinx community in infections, hospitalizations, and death.

Dr. Jesus R. Torres, lead study author and emergency medicine physician at UCLA Health, aimed to study undocumented people because they tend not to be identified in existing research even though they comprise approximately 3% of the population in the U.S., according to the Pew Research Center. Torres noted that the [emergency room](#) is one of the very few places where [undocumented immigrants](#) can get access to medical care.

From September 2, 2021, to March 31, 2022, the researchers surveyed 306 emergency room patients about their citizenship status and whether they received a COVID-19 vaccine or not. The group was comprised of adult men, women, and Latinx, Black, white, and other races.

The researchers found that undocumented Latinx patients were more likely to have a prior COVID-19 infection. They also found that the group had the same rate of vaccine uptake compared to other groups in the study.

"We would have expected Latinx patients to have lower rates of vaccination, considering higher rates of infection, hospitalizations, and death," Torres said.

Torres said that from a [public health perspective](#), it's imperative to identify disadvantaged groups for research, policy advising, [resource allocation](#), and targeted vaccine uptake campaigns.

**More information:** COVID-19 Vaccine Uptake in Undocumented Latinx Patients Presenting to the Emergency Department, *JAMA Network Open* (2024). DOI: [10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2024.8578](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2024.8578). [jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen.2024.8578](https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen.2024.8578)

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