Racial disparities seen in PET/CT imaging for lung cancer
23 June 2020

(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.

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