



HCSP FACT SHEET

HCV ADVOCATE

• HCV POPULATIONS •

Hepatitis C and U.S. Hispanics

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Foreword

There are an estimated 40 million Hispanics living in the United States. Hispanics are the largest and fastest growing minority group in the U.S. By the year 2050, 25% of the U.S. population will be of Hispanic origin. The number of Hispanics with hepatitis C (2.6%) is higher than the number of people with hepatitis C in the general population (1.3%). Hepatitis C disease progression has been shown to be faster in Hispanics than in non-Hispanic Whites. Treatment of hepatitis C, however, has been found to be as effective in Hispanics as it is in Whites.

Prevalence

“Hispanic” is a term used for a group of Americans of Spanish heritage. It doesn’t give us an accurate picture of the different nationalities or countries of origin. A study released in 2014 by Albert Einstein College of Medicine of Yeshiva University provided an analysis of the country of origin within the U.S. Hispanic population. The study gathered information from the NHANES survey and Hispanic Community Health Study/Study of Latinos (HCHS/SOL). One misunderstanding was due to the fact that most prior studies only focused on Mexican-American Hispanics. The HCHS/SOL study provided a better, but not perfect demographic breakdown of infection within U.S. Hispanic population:

- Puerto Rican - 11.6%
- Mexican - 1.9%
- Dominican - 1.5%
- Central American - 1%
- South American - 0.4%
- Cuban - 0.8%

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The information in this fact sheet is designed to help you understand and manage HCV and is not intended as medical advice. All persons with HCV should consult a medical practitioner for diagnosis and treatment of HCV.

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Hepatitis C and U.S. Hispanics

The report stated that men had a higher prevalence of hepatitis C. Puerto Rican women had the highest prevalence of hepatitis C at 3.9%. No other details about women were provided.

The prevalence of HCV not only differed by Hispanic American background but also by city. The Bronx had the highest prevalence of HCV at 4.5%—San Diego (1.7%), Chicago (1.2%), and Miami (0.8%).

Disease Progression

There is little data about HCV disease progression in Hispanics. The possible reasons for the lack of information are language barriers, access to care, patient education, and awareness of HCV in the Hispanic community. In addition, there are other factors that can influence disease progression in Hispanics, such as the higher prevalence of obesity, diabetes and steatosis (fatty liver disease) in the Hispanic population.

Most of the current information about Hispanics and disease progression has come from the Veterans Administration. It should be noted, however that when the VA is looking at a patient population it is dealing with more health issues such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) or drug/alcohol problems that can skew the results from the study. A recent study of HCV veterans was conducted by the Veterans Administration (VA) from 2000 and 2009 and the veterans were followed for at least 1 year of follow-up. The

study found that Hispanics had a 28% increased risk of cirrhosis and a 61% increased risk of liver cancer compared to non-Hispanic Whites. It is important to remember that this is one study. More studies are needed to confirm these results. But it is also important that everyone with hepatitis C, including Hispanics, receives medical care on a regular basis.

HCV Treatment

Prior to the approval of HCV inhibitor therapy, HCV treatment response rates were somewhat lower in Hispanics. Now, Hispanics have the same cure rates as other people with hepatitis C. Everyone with hepatitis C should talk to a medical provider about treatment and whether it is the right time to begin treatment.

Drugs in Development

There are many drugs in development. The combinations of HCV inhibitors have the potential to cure everyone with hepatitis C with fewer side effects and shorter treatment periods.

Resources:

HCV Advocate Web page for Spanish speaking people: www.hcvadvocate.org/espanol.asp

Note

An earlier version of this fact sheet was published as *Hepatitis C and Latinos*.

Hepatitis C and U.S. Hispanics***Related publications:***

- **HCV Advocate Spanish Language Page**
www.hcvadvocate.org/espanol.asp
- **African Americans and HCV**
www.hcvadvocate.org/hepatitis/factsheets_pdf/African_Americans.pdf
- **HCV & Native American Peoples**
www.hcvadvocate.org/hepatitis/factsheets_pdf/Native_Americans.pdf

For more information

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ayuda para Adquirir Medicamentos (<i>Patient Assistance Programs</i>)
http://www.hcvadvocate.org/hepatitis/spanish%20easyfacts/Ayuda.pdf | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pregúnteme sobre la hepatitis C (<i>Ask Me About Hepatitis C Palm Card</i>)
http://www.hcvadvocate.org/brochures/spanish_palmcard_2012.pdf |
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