

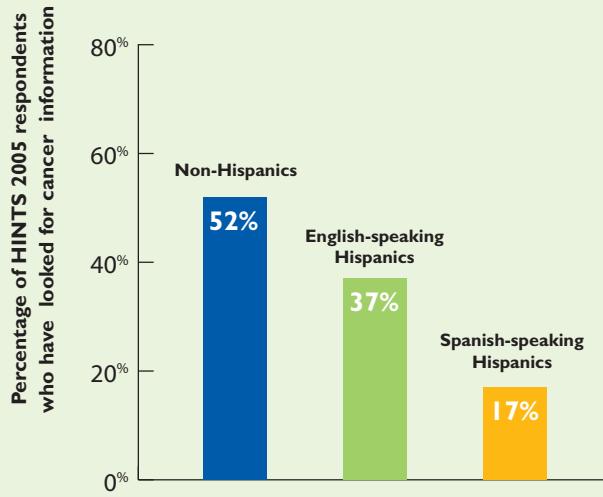
Hispanics Less Likely to Seek Cancer Information than Non-Hispanics

83% of Spanish-speaking Hispanics have never looked for cancer information

Differences in cancer information seeking and information access have the potential to shape health knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and medical decisions, and may contribute to disparities in health outcomes among disadvantaged populations.

HINTS 2005 data reveal that information seeking among Hispanics is low, and it differs according to English fluency; 37% of English-speaking Hispanics and 17% of Spanish-speaking Hispanics say they have ever looked for information about cancer, compared with 52% of non-Hispanics.

Hispanics, and particularly Spanish-speaking Hispanics, may experience multiple challenges and barriers in seeking and interpreting cancer information and in making informed decisions about their health. In this HINTS Brief, we explore the experience of cancer information seeking among Hispanic respondents to HINTS 2005.



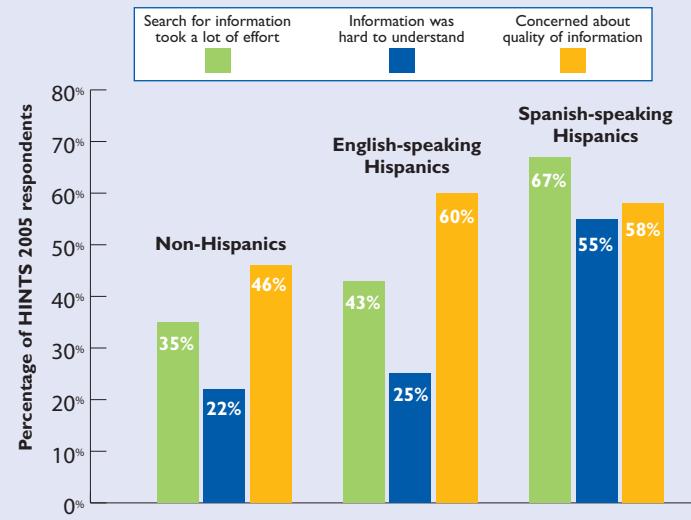
Hispanics Report Low Levels of Satisfaction with Cancer Information Seeking

While the majority of Hispanic respondents to HINTS 2005 reported never seeking cancer information from any source, those who sought cancer information experienced dissatisfaction with their search.

Hispanics reported low confidence in their ability to obtain cancer information. Close to 30% of Spanish-speaking individuals had little to no confidence in their ability to obtain cancer information compared to 6% of non-Hispanics and 11.5% of English-speaking Hispanics.

Among Spanish-speaking Hispanics, 67% said their last search for cancer information took a lot of effort, 55% said the information was hard to understand, and 58% had concerns about the quality of the information they found. Among English-speaking Hispanics, the information-seeking experience was slightly better, with 43% saying their last search took a lot of effort, 25% saying the information was hard to understand, and 60% having concerns about the quality of information they found.

Non-Hispanics reported more favorable ratings of their information-seeking experiences than Hispanics: 35% reported that their last search took a lot of effort; 22% reported that the information was hard to understand, and 46% reported concerns about information quality.



Cancer Information-Seeking Experiences of Hispanics: Language Matters

Only a small proportion (21%) of Spanish-speaking Hispanic respondents reported being completely comfortable speaking English. Non-English speakers may find it difficult to access and participate in the primarily English-language health care system. Cultural factors, including language spoken, have been shown to influence cancer information-seeking behaviors. When compared to non-Hispanics, HINTS data show Spanish-speaking Hispanics are less likely to feel confident they could obtain health information.

Quick Facts

- Hispanics are the largest and fastest-growing minority population in the United States.
- According to the U.S. Census Bureau, over 44 million individuals in the United States identify themselves as being Hispanic.
- The U.S. Census Bureau reports that almost 11% of the U.S. population, or 28.1 million people, speak Spanish as their primary language.
- In 2006, Hispanics in the United States were diagnosed with 82,000 new cases of cancer; of these, 23,000 died from the disease.
- In the United States, Hispanics have higher incidence of and mortality from cervical, stomach, liver, and gallbladder cancers compared to non-Hispanics.
- In the United States, Hispanics have lower incidence of and mortality from breast, prostate, colon, and lung cancers compared to non-Hispanics.

How Can This Inform Your Work?

English fluency is one of many factors that influence Hispanics' interactions with the U.S. health care system. Spanish-speaking Hispanics may encounter barriers to accessing the abundant supply of primarily English-language cancer-prevention and treatment information. Health communication practitioners are uniquely positioned to address language barriers in order to promote cancer knowledge, beliefs, screening, and treatment options among Hispanics.

Please note that online usage patterns continue to evolve. Additional research into the value and effectiveness of using the Web as a channel for information is recommended as you design outreach programs.

- In order to increase information seeking among this population, consider outreach efforts to promote utilization of accessible, language-appropriate cancer information resources.
- In addition to translating traditional information sources such as print materials, consider utilizing interpersonal channels of communication (i.e., healthcare providers, family, and friends) for outreach to Hispanics.
- Assess whether the Internet is an appropriate channel to reach your target audience. When it comes to Internet usage, only 21% of the Spanish-speaking population said they were online compared with 66% Non-Hispanics and 58% of English-speaking Hispanics.

About HINTS <http://hints.cancer.gov>

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) fielded the first Health Information National Trends Survey (HINTS) in 2002 and 2003, surveying 6,369 Americans. Subsequent surveys followed in 2005 (5,586 Americans surveyed) and 2007 (7,674 Americans surveyed). HINTS was created to monitor changes in the rapidly evolving field of health communication. The survey data can be used to understand how adults use different communication channels to obtain health information for themselves and their loved ones, and to create more effective health communication strategies across populations.

HINTS Briefs provide a snapshot of noteworthy, data-driven research findings. They introduce population-level estimates for specific questions in the survey and summarize significant research findings that are a result of analyzing how certain demographic characteristics influence specific outcomes. Many Briefs summarize research findings from recent peer-reviewed journal articles using HINTS data.

NCI continues to assess and respond to the unique cancer information needs of Hispanics. Current NCI efforts to improve access to and use of cancer information by this population include the availability of culturally and linguistically appropriate resources such as Spanish-language print publications and materials available online at NCI's Spanish Web site (<http://www.cancer.gov/espanol>). In addition, NCI's Cancer Information Service (1-800-4-CANCER) can provide callers with information in Spanish.

For More Information on Cancer

- Call the NCI Cancer Information Service at 1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237)
- Visit <http://cancer.gov> and <http://www.cancer.gov/espanol>
- Order NCI publications at <https://cissecure.nci.nih.gov/ncipubs/>



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