

Addressing Sexual and Reproductive Health Disparities among **Latinos**

Latinos face greater obstacles to obtaining, and benefiting from, sexual and reproductive health services than non-Latino white Americans. As a result, Latinos experience higher rates of reproductive cancers, unintended pregnancy, and sexually transmitted infections than most other groups of people in the U.S, as the statistics here show.

Planned Parenthood is here for the Latino community and committed to helping combat these startling statistics. In 2013, 22 percent of Planned Parenthood patients were Latino – more than 575,000 people. Planned Parenthood health centers work every day with Latinos to improve their health and to help them protect themselves and their families through education, preventive care, and lifesaving cancer and STD screenings.



Reproductive Cancers

- Latinas are more likely to be diagnosed with cervical cancer than women of any other racial or ethnic group (ACS, 2015).
- Latinas have the third highest death rates from cervical cancer (ACS, 2015).
- Even when diagnosed at similar ages and stages and with similar tumor characteristics, Latinas are more likely to die from breast cancer than non-Latina white women. Breast cancer is the leading cause of cancer death among Latinas (ACS, 2012).

Health Insurance

- A greater percentage of Latinas (31 percent) are uninsured than the women of any other racial or ethnic group, and a quarter of Latinas live in poverty (KFF, 2014; U.S. Census Bureau, 2014).
- Approximately 14 percent of Latinos use Medicaid, the federal-state health coverage program, for their health care needs (Salganicoff et al., 2014).

- Latinos who are undocumented or are legal permanent residents with less than five years in the U.S. are barred from benefiting from federally funded care under Medicaid (Majerol et al., 2015).
- Approximately 16 percent of Latinas have not visited a physician in the last two years, and one quarter of Latinas do not have a regular health care provider (Salganicoff et al., 2014).

Unintended and Teen Pregnancies

- Fifty-six percent of pregnancies among Latinas are unintended, and nearly four in 10 of these pregnancies end in abortion (Finer and Zolna, 2014).
- While at an historic low, the rate at which Latina adolescents give birth is more than twice that of non-Latina white teens (Martin et al., 2015). Latina teens are about 1.5 times more likely to have a repeat teen birth, compared to non-Latina white teens (Gavin et al., 2013).
- Latina adolescents are at a much higher risk of pregnancy because they have significantly lower rates of contraceptive use (Martinez, 2011).

- Latina adolescents are less likely to use contraception because they are less able to afford birth control and less likely to have health insurance (Fuentes et al., 2010; Smith & Medalia, 2014).
- Latinas are more likely to live in areas with poor access to family planning services (Fuentes et al., 2010).

Sexually Transmitted Infections

- Latinos contract HIV at more than three times the rate of non-Latino whites (CDC, 2014a).
- The rate of gonorrhea for Latinos is nearly double that of non-Latino whites (CDC, 2014b).
- The rate of chlamydia among Latinos is more than twice as high as it is for non-Latino whites (CDC, 2014b).

Sources

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