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TITLE

HPV Awareness and Prevention During the COVID-19 Pandemic Among Hispanic/Latinx Communities in the Bay Area

ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic has made access to preventive services, including cancer screening and prevention, more difficult. Cancer is the number one cause of death among Latinas; thus, prevention is critical for mitigating cancer inequities. Through a community-engaged partnership with Latinas Contra Cancer (www.latinascontracancer.org) and the Stanford Medicine Office of Community Engagement, our study aimed to assess how the pandemic affected access to and utilization of cancer prevention services including pap smears and the HPV vaccine among Latinx communities in the Bay Area. Data was collected via a survey (delivered online, by phone, and in person) of self-identified Latinx/Hispanic adults living in Bay Area counties.

Our preliminary results (n = 115 participants: 90% female, 92% foreign-born) show that 28.7% of respondents had never heard of HPV, and 10.4% were unsure. Of those who needed an HPV test since 2020 (n=25), 44% had to postpone it due to the pandemic. Among those that were 45 years old or younger (n = 52), only 6% were planning to get the HPV vaccine. Out of the respondents that had children older than 9 years (n = 88), only 15% were planning to vaccinate them against HPV. Additionally, 51% of female respondents needed or were planning to have a pap smear since March 2020. Of those, 44% had to postpone it due to the pandemic.

Our findings highlight the need to increase HPV awareness and prevention among Latinx communities in the Bay Area, and to engage policy, clinics and other stakeholders in decreasing barriers exacerbated by the pandemic.

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COMMUNITY PARTNER

[Latinas Contra Cancer](http://www.latinascontracancer.org)

CATEGORY

Improving Health Equity, Healthcare Access, Service, and Quality,
Promotion of Health Awareness and Healthcare Access Through Education