



RESEARCH SUMMARY

COVID-19 TESTING & VACCINATION IN THE HISPANIC POPULATION

How behaviors differed by Hispanic heritage and language preference

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the National Institutes of Health made a significant investment to study ways to reduce health disparities. Through the RADx-UP initiative, researchers and community leaders across the country partnered around COVID-19 testing to learn alongside underserved communities. Now, the RADx-UP consortium is looking at this nationwide dataset to identify effective strategies for reducing disparities to improve health for all.

Overview

COVID-19 severely affected Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish (hereafter, “Hispanic”) populations in the U.S., with a high rate of COVID-19 infections and deaths compared to other groups. Yet, helping Hispanic communities access testing and vaccination services was a challenge across the nation. In this study, researchers wanted to understand if Hispanic heritage and language affected whether Hispanic community members participated in COVID-19 testing and got vaccinated. They found that there is no single “Hispanic” population and that testing and vaccination varied by language and heritage across the diverse population. They gained their insights from a large dataset contributed by 18 research projects across the U.S. that were part of the NIH RADx® Underserved Populations research initiative.



Main study focus

Researchers looked at the combined dataset to see if participants had ever been tested for COVID-19 and/or received a COVID-19 vaccine. They associated these responses with participants' reported Hispanic heritage (Mexican, Cuban, Dominican, Puerto Rican, other Central American, South American, or multiple) and language preference (speaking English only at home or speaking Spanish or another language other than English at home).

They also considered participants' age, gender identity, highest level of education, insurance coverage, income, number of other medical conditions they have, and U.S. region where they live (South, West, Midwest, Northeast).

KEY FINDINGS AND INSIGHTS

Hispanic heritage was associated with differences in COVID-19 testing and vaccination

- Those reporting Puerto Rican or Dominican heritage were more likely to test for COVID-19 than those reporting Mexican heritage.
- South American heritage was associated with both higher testing and vaccination rates compared with Mexican heritage.
- Those who spoke Spanish at home in addition to English were more likely to receive a COVID-19 vaccine if they reported Mexican or other Central American heritage.



Language usage was associated with differences in vaccination and testing

For individuals who did not report their heritage, speaking Spanish or another language at home in addition to English was associated with increased COVID-19 testing, compared with speaking only English at home. Those who reported Mexican, Cuban, or Central American heritage who spoke Spanish or another language other than English at home had higher rates of COVID-19 vaccination compared with those who spoke only English in the home.



There is no single "Hispanic" population

Designing national public health services that are culturally appropriate for the wide range of Hispanic communities is challenging, largely because different Hispanic populations have settled in different parts of the U.S., have retained language and cultural norms in different ways, and participate in testing and vaccination.



Improving health care access and use is challenging in this diverse population

The challenge in making health care more accessible to Hispanic individuals, and in increasing their use of health care, is significant. The factors making this effort more difficult include the Hispanic population's large size, diversity, geographic distribution, and differences in culture, language, and immigration experiences.





STUDY POPULATION

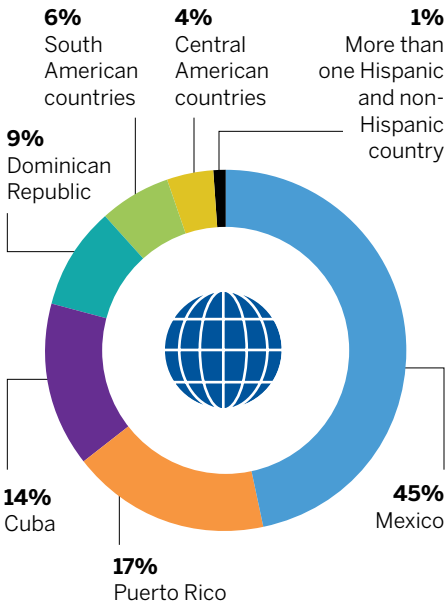
The study included more than

3,000

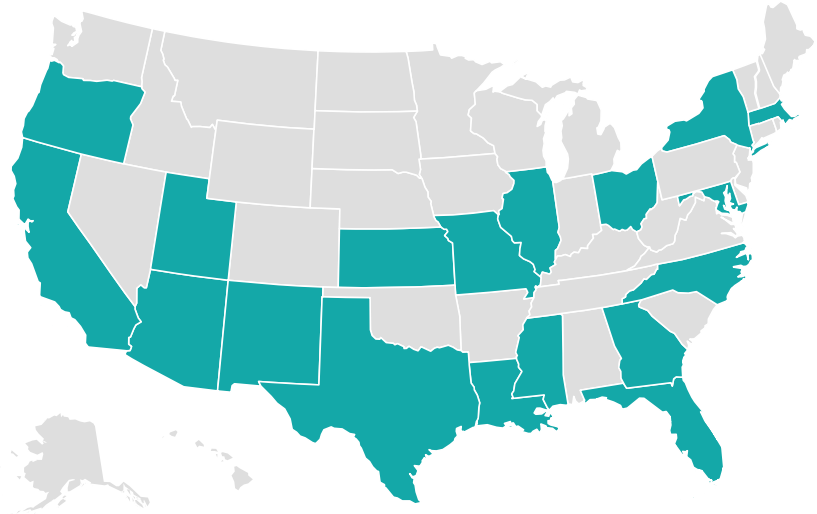
Hispanic individuals who were 18 years old or older.

All participants lived in the U.S. and participated in a RADx-UP project between **February 2021-June 2022**.

Participants represented **26 Hispanic heritage groups**, including:

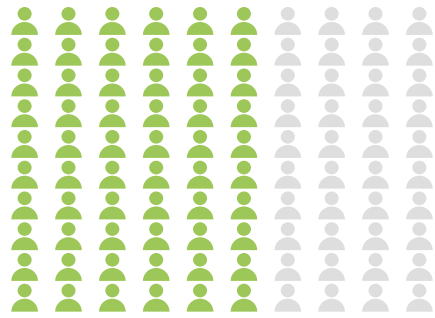


Participants came from 18 combined RADx-UP projects across **18 states**



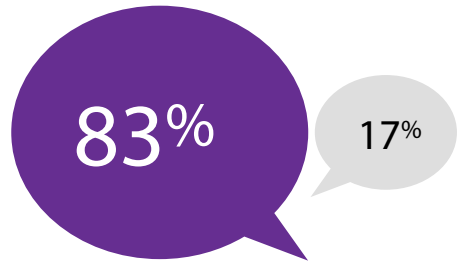
The average age of the participants was about

44 YEARS OLD



60% of the participants were women.

83% of the participants spoke Spanish or another language other than English at home



TO LEARN MORE, READ THE FULL ARTICLE

D'Agostino EM, Garcia JR, Bakken SR, Wruck L, Nilles EK, Stefano TA, Martin HR, Hungler A, Lee RE, Perreira KM, Baum MK, Brown D. Examining COVID-19 testing and vaccination behaviors by heritage and linguistic preferences among Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish RADx-UP participants. *Prev Med Rep.* 2023 Aug 2;35:102359. doi: 10.1016/j.pmedr.2023.102359. PMID: 37584063; PMCID: PMC10424123.

Endnote

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Photos courtesy of the RADx-UP Image Bank