



For Immediate Release

September 1st, 2005

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Ethnic Physicians Take The Lead In The Fight Against Cancer Disparities!

New Website Provides Information And Tools To Increase Cancer Screening Rates Among Asians And Latinos

In an uncommon alliance, Latino and Asian/Pacific Island physicians have joined together to increase cancer screening rates in California's Latino and Asian communities. Ethnic physicians around the state have worked tirelessly to develop new website resources focused on increasing awareness and highlighting the need for early cancer detection, www.ethnicphysicians.org. This site is designed to provide physicians and their patients' access to information and tools in 11 different languages to effectively promote cancer screening in Latino and Asian communities.

Less than 70 percent of Chinese, Vietnamese, and Korean women report having a Pap test in the last three years—a disturbing statistic since Vietnamese women are five times more likely than white women to have cervical cancer.

“Some Asian women may be reluctant to ask their physicians, especially if the physician is male, for a Pap smear or mammogram because of cultural issues regarding modesty,” explains Dr. Quyen Ngo-Metzger, a U.C. Irvine physician. “Many Asian men and women are not aware that they need special screening tests for cancer. ***Many patients that I have encountered assume that the doctor has ordered all the needed tests. We need to educate the public to ask for these tests.***”

“Cancer is one of the major causes of death for Asian Americans,” notes Edward A. Chow, M.D., Executive Director of the Chinese Community Health Care Association in San Francisco. “Unfortunately, the diagnosis is often made late in the course of the disease. Using proven cancer detecting tests can reduce mortality rates by diagnosing it early.”

Cervical cancer is high among Latina women; with rates double that of white women. “I stress with my patients the need to get preventive health check-ups and encourage them to get cervical and breast cancer screenings,” says Dr. Margaret Juarez, an OB-GYN practicing in Los Angeles and President of the California Latino Medical Association. “The earlier that a diagnosis is made, the better the outcome. Cancer screening saves lives.”

Developed by an expert panel of physicians, www.ethnicphysicians.org highlights in-language media ads, fliers, and brochures, written in Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Khmer and others. 11 languages in all, designed to help physicians and their patients engage in early cancer detection. The Network of Ethnic Physician Organizations, the California Medical Association Foundation and The California Endowment sponsored this project.

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