



HEALTH AWARENESS

Can Research Level The Playing Field For Minorities?

(NAPSA)—There are some things only a woman can do—and helping researchers understand the unique medical needs of women is one of them.

As the medical community recognizes that men and women respond differently to diseases and treatments, more women are participating in medical research, which will lead to better prevention, diagnosis and treatment of disease. In addition, studies also demonstrate that diseases affect racial and ethnic groups differently. For example:

Heart Disease is the leading cause of death in African-American, Hispanic and American-Indian/Alaska-Native women. African-American women have the highest mortality rate for heart disease.

Cancer is the leading cause of death for Asian and Pacific Islander women and the second leading cause of death among African-American women and Hispanics in the U.S. Cervical cancer is more common among Vietnamese women than any other group, followed by Hispanic, Korean and Native-Alaskan women.

Diabetes is two to four times more likely among African American, Hispanic, American Indian and Asian and Pacific Islander women than among Caucasian women.

AIDS disproportionately affects women of African American and Hispanic descent, who represent 77.5 percent of all reported cases in the U.S. The rate of AIDS cases for African-American women is 20 times higher than for Caucasian



Research may help to explain why there is a difference in the way diseases affect women in various ethnic and racial groups.

women, and more than three times higher than for other minority groups.

A recent Institute of Medicine report confirmed that racial and ethnic disparities in health care may result in unequal treatment and affect access to care. Further research on these issues may help eliminate disparities in health care.

By participating in research studies, minority women can help develop medical knowledge that has the potential to improve their health and benefit the health of future generations.

To learn more about medical research and how to participate in studies, visit the Society for Women's Health Research at www.womancando.org.