

## Race And Chronic Pain

(NAPSA)—Many Americans aren't dealing with pain. Recent studies show one in five chronic pain sufferers has not seen a doctor about the pain and only one in 20 patients has seen a pain specialist.

Chronic pain is about equally distributed among Americans of all races, according to the researchers. The American Pain Foundation estimates 50 million people in this country suffer persistent pain. However, while about 85 percent of Caucasians and African Americans said they'd gone to a doctor, only 70 percent of Hispanics had. Hispanics are more likely to try to treat chronic pain themselves, particularly those who speak Spanish at home.

"The remarkable finding that about one-third of the Caucasians, African Americans and Hispanics who were initially contacted for the study reported persistent pain for at least three months during the past year confirms the magnitude of pain as a national public health problem," said Russell Portenoy, M.D., chairman of the Department of Pain Medicine and Palliative Care at Beth Israel Medical Center in New York.

The survey results showed that perceived low access to care correlated with being Hispanic or speaking Spanish, being younger or male, having low income or limited education, being unemployed, and having financial concerns that prevented pain treatment.

"This study validates what most Latinos have known for a



**A recent study found racial disparities in treatment of chronic pain.**

long time—that lack of medical insurance and proficient health education along with language barriers all impede access to care, especially when it comes to pain management," said Venus Ginés, CEO/Founder of Día de la Mujer Latina, Inc. Ms. Ginés is also a breast cancer survivor and has been diagnosed with lupus, a chronic inflammatory disease that can affect various parts of the body, especially the skin, joints, blood and kidneys.

"While pain does not discriminate, it seems access to appropriate treatment does," says researcher Ivonne Fuller. "By identifying factors that can limit access to pain care, studies such as this one help demonstrate the need for improved education and health care services for minorities in pain."

For more information, visit [www.partnersagainstpain.com](http://www.partnersagainstpain.com).