Health Disparities in the Medi-Cal Population

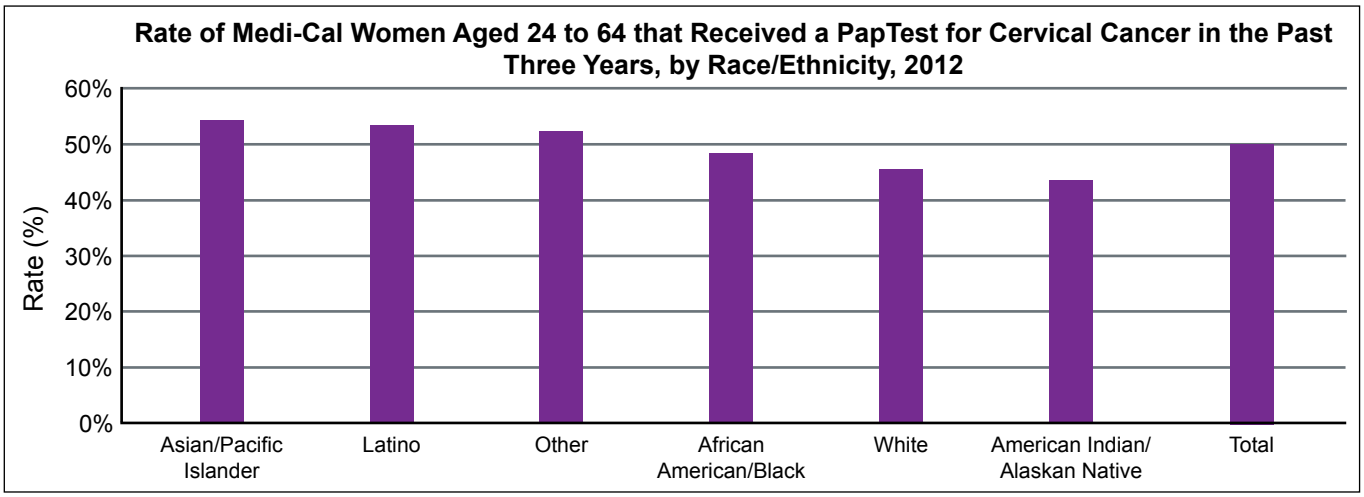
Cervical Cancer Screening

Cervical cancer was the leading cause of cancer deaths in women in the United States (U.S.) until increased Pap testing resulted in significant decreases in the number of cervical cancer cases and deaths.[1] In the U.S., Latino women are most likely to get cervical cancer, followed by African-Americans/Blacks, Whites, American Indians/Alaskan Natives, and Asians/Pacific Islanders.[2] Six out of 10 cervical cancers occurred in women who had never had a Pap test or who had not been screened in the past 5 years.[3] Regular Pap testing can detect cervical cancer in its early stages, which is highly treatable.[1] The five-year relative survival rate for early stages of invasive cervical cancer is 93%.[4]

In 2012, rates of Pap test screening for women, aged 24 to 64, enrolled in commercial health plans both nationally[5] and in California[6] (76% and 81%, respectively) were higher than those enrolled in Medicaid (50%)[5] and California Medi-Cal (50%).

In the California Medi-Cal population, aged 24 to 64, Asian/Pacific Islander women were more likely to have a Pap test in the past three years (54%), followed by Latino (53%), Other (52%), African American/Black (48%), White (45%), and American Indian/Alaskan Native (43%) women (see Figure).

Figure



Source: Medi-Cal Management Information System/Decision Support System (MIS/DSS), 2012
Note: Members eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid were excluded
Click to link to more detailed graph by race/ethnicity

1. American Cancer Society. Cervical cancer prevention and early detection. http://www.cancer.org/acs/groups/cid/documents/webcontent/003167-pdf.pdf. Published December 2014. Accessed July 2015.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Cervical cancer rates by race and ethnicity. http://www.cdc.gov/cancer/cervical/statistics/race.htm. Published January 2008. Accessed December 2008.
3. Women with disabilities. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Web site. http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/women.html. Updated March 31 2014. Accessed July 2015.
4. National Cancer Institute. SEER Stat fact sheets: Cervical uteri cancer. http://seer.cancer.gov/statfacts/html/cervix.html. Accessed October 2014.
5. National Committee for Quality Assurance. Improving quality and patient experience. The state of health care quality, 2013 http://www.ncqa.org/Portals/0/Newsroom/SOHC/2013/SOHC-web_version_report.pdf. Accessed September 2014.
6. NCQA's Quality Compass Data Base 2012. Washington, DC: The National Committee for Quality Assurance; 2012.

Link to Data Sources and Methods