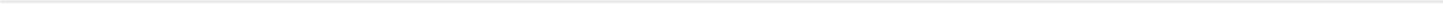




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Self-Reported Willingness to Have Cancer Screening and the Effects of Sociodemographic Factors

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Abstract

Background

The relative effects of race/ethnicity and other sociodemographic factors, compared to those of attitudes and beliefs on willingness to have cancer screening, are not well understood.

Methods

We conducted telephone interviews with 1148 adults (31% African American, 27% Puerto Rican American, 43% white) from 3 cities in mainland United States and Puerto Rico. Respondents reported their sociodemographic characteristics, attitudes about barriers and facilitators of cancer screening, and willingness to have cancer screening under 4 scenarios: when done in the community vs one's doctor's office, and whether or not one had symptoms.

Results

Racial/ethnic minority status, age, and lower income were frequently associated with increased willingness to have cancer screening, even after including attitudes and beliefs about screening. Having screening nearby was important for community screening, and anticipation of embarrassment from screening for when there were no cancer symptoms. Associations varied across 4 screening scenarios, with the fewest predictors for screening by one's doctor when there were symptoms.

Conclusions

Sociodemographic characteristics not only were related to willingness to have cancer screenings in almost all cases, but were generally much stronger factors than attitudinal barriers and facilitators. Cancer screening campaigns should affect attitudinal change where possible, but should also recognize that targeting screening to specific population groups may be necessary.

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Keywords

cancer screening; knowledge; attitudes; and beliefs; minority health

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