

Promoting Awareness of Healthy Eating and Physical Activity in Hispanic Women to Reduce Cancer Risk

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ABSTRACT

Background: Latino population is one of the fastest growing minority groups in the United States. As the Latino population continues to increase, chronic diseases such as cancer and obesity will increase. Thus, the development of interventions that promote awareness of healthy eating and an active lifestyle among Latinos are greatly needed. **Purpose:** The purpose of this study was to assess the effectiveness of a community-based wellness intervention for Latino women in promoting healthy eating and physical activity. **Methods:** Twenty-four Latino women between the ages 30-65 years participated in a eight-week intervention that included nutrition education focusing on nutrition labeling, selecting healthy food choices, and a structured aerobic program. These sessions were conducted during weekly "wellness community champs" meetings as part of the Parks and Recreation city programs. Participants completed demographic, nutrition and physical activity surveys at pre- and post-intervention. **Results:** Latino women who participated in this study reported an increase in their nutrition awareness of healthful food choices, food labeling, and recommended physical activity dosage and benefits ($p < 0.05$). **Conclusions:** Results from this study suggest that community-based wellness interventions may be successful in increasing awareness of a healthy lifestyle among Hispanic women.

KEY WORDS: Latino women, Lifestyle, Healthy eating, Physical activity