

## American College Of Radiology Urges African Americans To Join Clinical Trials

(NAPSA)—Cancer death rates for African-American men are 50 percent higher than for white men and 20 percent higher for African-American women than for white women, the American College of Radiology (ACR) reports. The cancer survival rates for both races are the same, however, when they take part in clinical studies.

In connection with National Minority Awareness Week (April 15-21), the ACR has launched a special public informational campaign to encourage African Americans to enroll in cancer treatment clinical studies. Currently 9 percent of the patients who enroll in these studies are African Americans, according to the National Cancer Institute.

Historically, African Americans have been reluctant to join these studies and many have not had equal access to the state-of-the-art treatments that these trials provide. A federal study in Tuskegee, AL ending some 30 years ago, followed the effects of untreated syphilis by withholding treatment from 399 African-American men. The study, which was stopped after its mishandling of patients was reported in the press, generated a deep mistrust among African Americans.

Since Tuskegee, strong regulations have been issued to safeguard the rights of those enrolled in studies and no such incident has since occurred.

Because of these safeguards, leaders in the health care field, many of them African Americans, have strongly urged African Americans to once again enroll in life-saving studies. It is particu-



larly important for African Americans to take advantage of the high quality of care offered in these trials.

Between 1960 and 1990 cancer deaths increased 62 percent among African-American men and 16 percent for African-American women. The cancer death rates for all races combined rose only 19 percent for men and 5 percent for women.

Since promising treatments are available through clinical studies long before they are widely available, research trials are desirable for patients who have severe side effects or don't improve with conventional treatment.

Patients who participate in clinical trials are assured that the treatments they receive are the best available. In addition, an important aspect of the clinical trial is careful monitoring.

Through grants from the NCI and through the auspices of ACR, the Radiation Oncology Therapy Group (RTOG), located in Philadelphia, PA, conducts numerous cancer clinical trials nationwide.

To learn more about current clinical studies and how to join contact: National Cancer Institute <http://cancer.net@icicc.nci.nih.gov> or 800-4CANCER. Clinical Trial Posting, <http://www.clinicaltrials.com> or 888-TRIAL11.