

Hispanics Have Healthier Ways Of Managing Stress

(NAPSA)—A recent national survey shows that while Hispanics are turning to healthier behaviors to manage stress, it still poses a major health problem.

The survey, conducted by the American Psychological Association (APA), looked at how people deal with stress and its effects on mind/body health across racial and ethnic groups. The survey was released in partnership with the National Women's Health Resource Center and the National Alliance for Hispanic Health.

According to the survey, Hispanics engage in healthy behaviors to manage stress—such as exercising and seeking support from family and friends—more than the general U.S. population, but stress is still a major health concern.

The survey also found that, when dealing with stress, Hispanics are less likely to rely on unhealthy behaviors, such as smoking (8 percent), compared to the general population (14 percent). Yet Hispanics feel the effects of stress in both body and mind. Among the most commonly reported symptoms are having trouble sleeping (61 percent); feeling nervous or sad (64 percent); feeling irritable or angry (52 percent); and headaches (47 percent).

Sources Of Stress

While they report many sources of stress, both Hispanic men and women report stress is most often related to concerns about the health of their family members. In comparison, the general public reports work and money as the top stressors. Meanwhile, nearly three-quarters of



Concerns about their families' health is a top source of stress for Hispanic men and women.

Hispanic women say they make the health decisions in their family versus one-third of Hispanic men and slightly more than half of the general public.

Ironically, although Hispanics are more likely to seek professional mental health care than the general public (22 percent vs. 15 percent), only 41 percent say they have mental health coverage, over 20 percent *less* than that of the general population.

"Stress is unavoidable. The key is how effectively people deal with stress," says Russ Newman, Ph.D., J.D., executive director for professional practice, APA. "Exercising and seeking support from family and friends are good examples of healthy ways to manage stress. People who are not taking proactive actions to manage stress or who are dealing with stress in unhealthy ways can actually cause more health problems for themselves, which leads to increased stress in the long run."

For more information on managing stress and mind/body health, visit the Web site at www.apahelpcenter.org.