PROJECT INFORMATION

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Testing a Program to Help Monitor Chronic Hepatitis B among Asian-American Patients

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Organization

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What was the research about?

Hepatitis B is a disease caused by a virus that attacks and injures the liver. Chronic hepatitis B, or CHB, is hepatitis that lasts more than six months. CHB increases the chance of getting liver cancer and other health problems. Monitoring CHB can help find liver cancer early and reduce complications.

In the United States, Asian Americans are more likely to have CHB than members of other racial and ethnic groups. Asian Americans are also more likely to develop liver cancer and have higher death rates from it. Cultural barriers and lack of access to care may prevent people from getting the care they need.

In this study, the research team tested a program designed for Asian-American patients with CHB to see if it helped patients get recommended care. The program included education and phone access and in-person meetings with patient navigators trained to help patients get care.

What were the results?

Compared with patients who received usual care from their doctors, patients in the program had

- More recommended doctor visits and blood tests
- More knowledge about CHB
- More perceived social support

- Higher perceived benefits related to the experience of living with CHB, such as learning to be more accepting of things
- Lower anxiety

The groups did not differ in how satisfied they were with their lives.

Who was in the study?

The study included 532 Asian-American adults with CHB living in Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey. Of these, 83 percent identified as Chinese, 10 percent as Korean, and 8 percent as Vietnamese. The average age was 50, and 53 percent were men.

What did the research team do?

The research team assigned patients by chance to take part in the program or receive usual care alone. Patients in the program had three in-person sessions about taking care of CHB. Patients received links to web-based educational programs to review. Patients also received text messages once a week for five weeks about going to the doctor and getting blood tests. Patients could also call or meet in person with patient navigators. Patients received information in their preferred language. Patients receiving usual care alone got follow-up care reminders from their doctors' office. Patients completed surveys at 6 and 12 months after the start of the study.

Patients, caregivers, healthcare providers like doctors and nurses, and community advocates provided input during the study.

What were the limits of the study?

The study included patients who identified as Chinese, Korean, or Vietnamese. Results may differ for other racial or ethnic groups.

Future research could test the program with patients from other groups at high risk for CHB, such as patients from southeast Asian, Pacific Islander, and

African immigrant communities in the United States. Researchers could also see if the effects of the program last more than a year.

How can people use the results?

Doctors can use these results when considering ways to help Asian-American patients with CHB get recommended care.

To learn more about this project, visit www.pcori.org/Ma314.