

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT NEWSLETTER ISSUE 6

Welcome



Augusto Villanueva, MD, PhD

In the United States, Hispanics and African Americans have a higher incidence of liver cancer than non-Hispanic Whites. Racial inequities affect access to liver cancer screening; African Americans are less likely to receive adequate biannual surveillance. The enrollment rate of liver cancer minority patients

in clinical trials that test new systemic therapies is low compared to Whites, which exacerbates racial inequalities in access to curative therapies. In New York City, liver cancer rates are strongly associated with neighborhood poverty.

The Division of Liver Diseases, in collaboration with the Tisch Cancer Institute at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, has been providing culturally and linguistically adapted workshops on liver cancer prevention to Latine, Chinese, Russian, African-born and Black/African American communities in New York City. Our goal has been to reduce cancer detection disparities in these communities by increasing knowledge on liver cancer. Our HONE (Hepatitis Outreach Network) program, dedicated to reducing Hepatitis disparities in the African-born immigrant community through free screenings, has emphasized the importance of screening at the community level. We have now expanded and include free screening for metabolic-dysfunction associated steatotic liver disease (MASLD) in the Latine community. HONE has been very successful at not only detecting Hepatitis through free screening, but also providing follow up care for their patients.

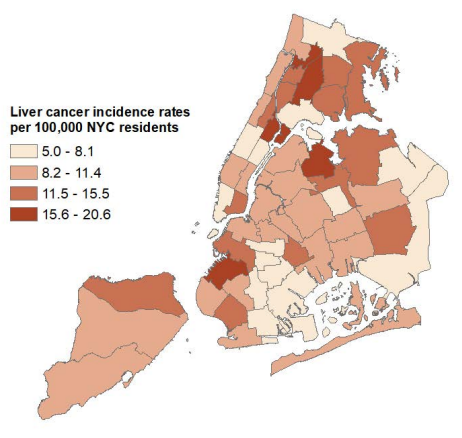
- Augusto Villanueva, MD, PhD

Data

Liver cancer is one of several priority cancers at the Tisch Cancer Institute at Mount Sinai. The incidence (the number of new individuals diagnosed) and mortality (the number of people who die) of liver differs across New York City. For example, areas with higher levels of poverty and higher racial/ethnic minority populations also have higher rates of incidence and mortality of liver cancer.

To show how these disparities are spread out across NYC, we created three maps with incidence and mortality rates of liver cancer in NYC by borough.

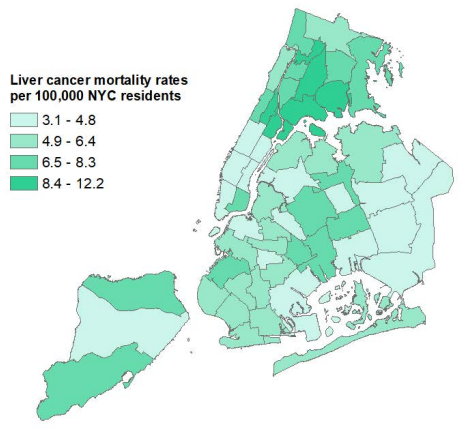
Age-Adjusted Liver Cancer Incidence Rates in NYC, 2016-2020



Map 1. Liver Cancer Incidence Rates in New York City by Borough, 2016-2020

On this map, areas with darker colors represent higher incidence rates of liver cancer, and areas with lighter colors presentation lower incidence rates of liver cancer.

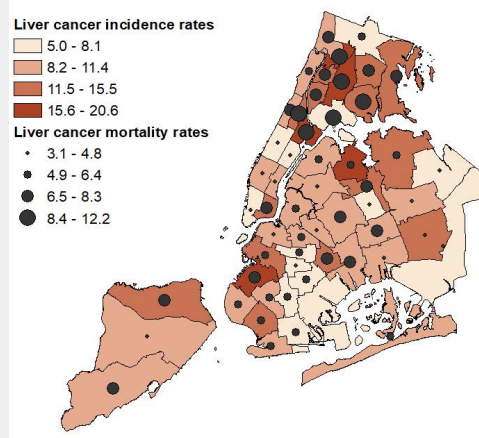
Age-Adjusted Liver Cancer Mortality Rates in NYC, 2016-2020



Map 2. Liver Cancer Mortality Rates in New York City by Borough, 2016-2020

On this map, areas with darker colors represent higher mortality rates of liver cancer, and areas with lighter color represent lower mortality rates of liver cancer.

Age-Adjusted Liver Cancer Incidence and Mortality Rates in NYC, 2016-2020



Map 3. Liver Cancer Incidence and Mortality Rates in New York City by Borough, 2016-2020

This map combines the data from Maps 1 and 2 onto a single map. On this map, areas with darker colors represent higher incidence rates of liver cancer, and the larger dots represent higher mortality rates of liver cancer.

Outreach

Community Partner Spotlight: African Services Committee

Located in the heart of Harlem, NY, the African Services Committee (ASC) stands as a beacon of support for immigrants, refugees, and asylees from the African Diaspora. Committed to upholding human rights, ASC offers a range of services tailored to empower individuals navigating life in a new country.



Hepatitis B (Hep B) is a significant contributor to liver cancer, particularly prevalent in African and Asian communities, with West Africa bearing a substantial burden. According to recent studies, individuals of African descent are disproportionately affected by Hep B, underscoring the critical need for awareness and support within these communities.

At African Services, we tackle this issue head-on. Through our free and confidential testing services, we provide screenings for HIV, STIs, and crucially, Hep B. Our focus extends beyond diagnosis; we're dedicated to educating our community on Hep B prevention, management, and the linkage to care. Through workshops, educational materials, and active participation in community events, we strive to empower individuals with the knowledge they need to

protect themselves and lead healthier lives.

In the past year, our organization has conducted a total of 384 Hep B tests. Among these, 36 individuals tested showed Hep B surface antigene positive, and were subsequently referred to our partner institution, Mount Sinai, for further evaluation and care coordination. Additionally, we provided Hep B vaccination to 82 clients identified as susceptible during our screening process.



In collaboration with Mount Sinai, we offer comprehensive care for those diagnosed with Hep B, ensuring they receive the support and treatment necessary for optimal health outcomes. From initial screenings to linkage to care, our team is committed to guiding individuals every step of the way.

At African Services Committee, our commitment to the community knows no bounds. We stand firm in our dedication to fostering a healthier, more informed

society, one where individuals have the resources and support they need to thrive. Together, we're making strides towards a future where Hepatitis B and liver cancer are no longer a threat to our community's well-being.

For more information about our programs and testing center, please visit

www.africanservices.org

Email: info@africanservices.org

Phone: 212-222-3882

Hepatitis Outreach Network

The Hepatitis Outreach Network (HONE) is a community viral hepatitis prevention, screening and link to care study focused on adult, minority groups in New York City who are at risk for chronic Hepatitis B virus (HBV) and chronic Hepatitis C virus (HCV). We seek to:

- 1) Raise awareness and provide education in minority communities in the New York City area at risk for chronic Hepatitis B and C
- 2) Create a comprehensive Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C free screening project in minority communities at high risk in the New York City area; and
- 3) Provide a link between screening outcomes and appropriate healthcare.

HONE offers combined HBV and HCV screening at no cost at a variety of health fairs and other events throughout New York City. This program is a collaboration between members of The Mount Sinai Health System Division of Liver Diseases and the Tisch Cancer Institute Community Outreach and Engagement program.

We are always looking for new partners! If you would like more information, please contact Assita Belemkoabga at assita.belemkoabga@mssm.edu or (212) 824-7161.

Meet Our New HONE Health Educator



Assita Belemkoabga, a devoted health educator, concentrates her efforts on promoting Hepatitis B and C testing within African immigrant communities in the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Manhattan. With a strong passion for community work, Assita dedicates herself to educating individuals about Hepatitis B, C, and liver cancer prevention, aiming to make a meaningful difference. As a future Master of Public Health (MPH) graduate, Assita is committed to eliminating health disparities, particularly among African immigrants, and creating a healthier, more equitable world for all.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Liver Cancer Event - “Cáncer de Hígado”

MÉXICO
CONSULADO GENERAL EN BOSTON

American Cancer Society
Cada cáncer. Cada vida.®

Visión y Compromiso™

Ventanilla de Salud

“Cáncer de Hígado”
Jueves 27 de Junio a las 12:00 p.m

INVITADOS ESPECIALES



Augusto Villanueva, MD, PhD
Profesor Asociado, Programa de Cáncer de Hígado - Tisch Cancer Institute
Divisiones de Enfermedades Hepáticas / Hematología y Oncología Médica - Departamento de Medicina, Escuela Icahn de Medicina en Mount Sinai

Camilo Correa, MD FACS
Profesor Asistente de Cirugía
Jefe Interino, División de Oncología Quirúrgica
Sistema de Salud Mount Sinai

IME INSTITUTO DE LOS MEXICANOS EN EL EXTERIOR

RELACIONES EXTERIORES SECRETARÍA DE RELACIONES EXTERIORES

MÉXICO CONSULADO GENERAL EN BOSTON

SALUD SECRETARÍA DE SALUD

@ConsulmexBoston

consulmex.sre.gob.mx/boston

In collaboration with the American Cancer Society, Ventanilla de Salud of Boston, and the Mexican Consulate of Boston, Mount Sinai will be holding a virtual webinar on Liver Cancer. This event will be held in Spanish.

Meet Our Panelists:

- Augusto Villanueva, MD, PhD: Associate Professor, Liver Cancer Program, Tisch Cancer Institute
- Camilo Correa, MD, FACS: Assistant Professor, Surgical Oncology, Mount Sinai Health System

Event Details:

- When: Thursday, June 27, 2024, 12:00 pm
- Where: Online via Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ConsulmexBoston/>

Research

Community Scientist Updates: Meet our New Community Scientist

We are excited to introduce you all to the newest member of our Community Scientist group!

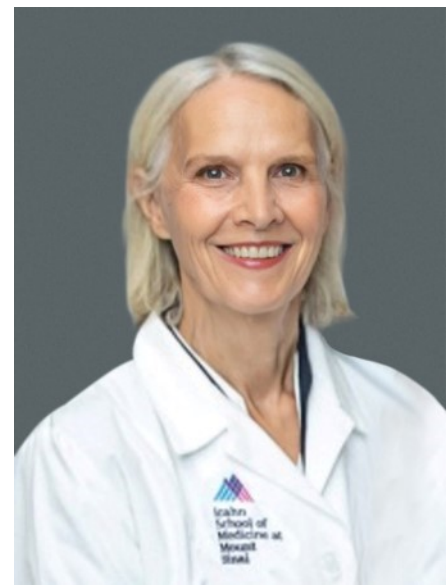
Tanisha Hill is an Upper West Side born and raised Native New Yorker and has a 17-year-old daughter, who is a high school senior. Tanisha is a Human Resources and Business Operations Professional with over 10 years of experience and is currently looking for her next role preferably in Tech. In her downtime, she loves dancing, working out, socializing with family and friends, meeting new people, exploring new foods, reading and researching. She decided to become a Community Scientist due to the disparities and medical discrimination Black people have historically encountered and her passion for social justice, diversity, equity and inclusion. Tanisha has also lost 3 relatives to Cancer and feels education and awareness regarding the disease should be accessible to all people, especially those in marginalized communities. In 2022, the American Cancer Society stated there will be an estimated 1.9 million new cancer cases diagnosed and 609,360 cancer deaths in the United States, which further increases her perceived demand for cancer education, as many will be impacted by cancer directly or indirectly.



Clinical Trials

We are working to understand liver cancer development and disease course in African Americans. The most common type of liver cancer is hepatocellular carcinoma (HCC). HCC nearly always arises in a liver that is severely damaged as a result of chronic liver disease. We found that African Americans with HCC have less extensive liver damage than other patients. This is important because it means that African Americans might benefit from beginning liver cancer screening at an earlier stage of liver disease progression than other patients. We are investigating both inherited and environmental factors as possible drivers of the unique profile of HCC in African Americans. We found that lead is associated with liver fibrosis in African Americans. We are investigating lead and other environmental pollutants as contributors to liver injury in African Americans and other people.

If you are interested in learning more about this study, please contact Dr. Andrea Branch at andrea.branch@mssm.edu.



Andrea Branch, PhD



*The Tisch Cancer
Institute*

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