

VOICES of Black Women Study Ambassador Discusses Health Equity in Cancer Care

The American Cancer Society's long-term study aims to understand cancer disparities among Black women.

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The American Cancer Society's (ACS) VOICES of Black Women health study highlights [cancer disparities](#) and aims to improve health outcomes for future generations. Its ambassador, Rockford Alderwomen Gina Meeks, recently discussed the importance of the study with [13 WREX](#), an Illinois-based news station.

While progress has been made, there is still work to do in improving [prevention](#), [diagnosis](#) and [treatment](#) rates for Black women.

For example, since 2010, cancer death rates have declined by 2% per year among Black women. Yet Black women are about 8% less likely to be diagnosed with cancer compared with white women and 12% more likely to die if diagnosed, according to the ACS. What's more, Black women under age 50 are twice as likely to die of [breast cancer](#) compared with white women.

VOICES of Black Women is a study spanning about 30 years that gathers data from Black women ages 25 to 55 from various backgrounds and income levels who have not been diagnosed with cancer. The study aims to enroll over 100,000 Black women from the 20 states plus Washington D.C., where a large portion of Black women in the country reside, according to 13 WREX. VOICES is the largest behavioral and environmental focused population study of cancer risk and outcomes in U.S. Black women, according to the ACS.

Meeks, who was diagnosed with triple-negative breast cancer last year, connected with ACS to use her voice to help improve Black women' health.

"I have been on my own cancer journey for over a year now, and it pleases my soul to help support the efforts of the American Cancer Society to improve health outcomes for Black women," Meeks told 13 WREX.

"It feels amazing to be seen by such a trend setting organization and to assist in finding best practices for health care systems that can often trend in data that is unfavorable to women that look like me," Meeks said. "I hope this call to action for Black women between the ages of 25 and 55 is received and acted upon right here in Rockford and throughout this country."

Enrollment is open in Alabama, California, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and Washington, D.C.

[Click here](#) to learn more about the study.

To read more, click [#Health Equity](#). There, you'll find headlines such as "[Black Health Equity Group Awarded \\$1.5M Grant to Diversify Medical Boards](#)," "[Air Pollution Harms Black Americans More Than Other Groups](#)" and "[Affordable Care Act May Increase Access to Colon Cancer Care for Underserved Groups](#)."