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ARTHRITIS STRIKES 3 MILLION U.S. HISPANICS
One in Five Report Severe Joint Pain and Limitations

WASHINGTON, D.C., Feb. 17, 2011 – Arthritis affects 3.1 million Hispanics in the U.S. and causes severe joint pain and limitations for at least one in five of them, according to new CDC data released today at a congressional briefing hosted by the National Alliance for Hispanic Health and the Arthritis Foundation.

The study, published in the Feb. 18 issue of *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, is the first of its kind to report on the prevalence of arthritis in a nationally representative sample of seven specific Hispanic sub-groups, including Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, Mexican Americans, South and Central Americans, Dominicans and Cubans. Among the key findings:

- An estimated 3.1 million Hispanics have arthritis.
 - Puerto Ricans reported the highest prevalence (22 percent), which is similar to the prevalence for non-Hispanic whites (23 percent) and blacks (22 percent).
 - Cubans/Cuban Americans reported the lowest prevalence (11.7 percent).
- The study looked at the prevalence of three significant arthritis-attributable effects: severe joint pain, activity limitations, and work limitations. While the prevalence varied across Hispanic sub-groups, at least one in five people in each sub-group reported each of the three effects.
 - Mexicans reported the highest work limitations.
 - Puerto Ricans reported the most joint pain and highest activity limitations.

“These findings suggest a critical need to expand the reach of effective strategies aimed at arthritis prevention and management, particularly among underserved populations,” said Dr. John H. Klippel, president and CEO of the Arthritis Foundation.

According to Dr. Jane L. Delgado, president and CEO of the National Alliance for Hispanic Health, “Seeing your health provider, engaging in movement, maintaining a healthy weight, and learning techniques to manage arthritis can dramatically improve lives. However, it is only by tailoring services to the needs of individuals that we will achieve this goal. Today’s first-ever data from the CDC on arthritis and Hispanic sub-groups is an important step in that effort.”

“Hispanics are the nation’s largest group after non-Hispanic whites, and will account for nearly a third of our population by 2050. That is why it’s important to understand how arthritis – the most common cause of disability – affects their lives and their work,” said Dr. Wayne H. Giles, director of the Division of Adult and Community Health at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. “This study advances that understanding and will help us to target our limited resources in ways that maximize the impact public health measures can have on improving the lives of Hispanics with arthritis.”

Resources for Managing Arthritis

To beat the pain and disability of arthritis and learn strategies for controlling arthritis, the Arthritis Foundation, the National Alliance for Hispanic Health and the CDC offer the following resources:

- **See a health provider.** Early diagnosis of arthritis is critical to its management and prevention of activity limitations. The Alliance offers a toll-free bilingual (Spanish and English) [Su Familia National Hispanic Family Health Helpline](tel:1-866-783-2645) (1-866-783-2645 or 1-866-SU-FAMILIA) where individuals can receive trusted health information and referral to health providers, including community health centers, in their community.
- **Engage in exercises.** Low impact exercise, such as walking, has been proven to reduce pain, improve function and quality of life, and delay arthritis-related disability. For joint-safe exercise programs, try the [Arthritis Foundation's Life Improvement Series](#) land or water exercise programs offered at more than 1,700 locations nationwide.
- **Maintain a healthy weight.** Extra weight adds unnecessary weight on your joints. For every pound you lose, that's four pounds of pressure off each knee. The Alliance is supporting Hispanic families making movement a daily part of their lives and improving access to healthy food through their *¡Vive tu vida! Get Up! Get Moving!*[®] free event series. With over 50,000 attendees to date, it is the largest annual Hispanic family healthy lifestyle event series. To learn more, visit www.getupgetmoving.org (English) or www.vivetuvida.org (Spanish).
- **Discover techniques to manage your arthritis.** Participate in self-management courses in English or Spanish to learn how to manage the pain and challenges that arthritis imposes. The Arthritis Foundation [Self-Help Course](#) teaches people how to have a stronger sense of control over their arthritis.
- **Learn more.** To learn more about programs offered in your area and to order free educational materials, visit <http://www.arthritis.org>, <http://www.hispanichealth.org> and <http://www.cdc.gov/arthritis/index.htm>

About the Arthritis Foundation

Striking one in every five adults and 300,000 children, arthritis is the nation's leading cause of disability. The Arthritis Foundation (www.arthritis.org) is committed to raising awareness and reducing the impact of this serious disease, which can severely damage joints and rob people of living life to its fullest. The Foundation funds life-changing research that has restored mobility in patients for more than six decades; fights for access to quality health care for the millions who live with arthritis; and partners with families to provide transformative programs and information.

About the National Alliance for Hispanic Health

The Alliance is the nation's foremost science-based source of information and trusted advocate for the health of Hispanics in the United States. The Alliance represents thousands of Hispanic health providers across the nation providing services to more than 15 million each year, making a daily difference in the lives of Hispanic communities and families. For more information, visit www.hispanichealth.org or call the Alliance's *Su Familia* Hispanic Family Health Helpline at 1-866-783-2645.