Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Operative Management of Carpal Tunnel Syndrome in a National Single-Payer System

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Speaker Financial Disclosure: Trista Marie Benitez, MPH, BA

General Payments - None
Research Payments – None
Ownership and Investment Interest - None
Associated Research – None
CTS is a common cause of hand and wrist pain

CTR is safe and offers long-lasting symptom relief

Yet, research suggests differential access to CTR based on socioeconomic status

CTS = Carpal Tunnel Syndrome; CTR = Carpal Tunnel Release
Background

In a setting of reduced barriers to care, are there racial and ethnic differences in surgical care access for CTS?
Study Design and Cohort

- Retrospective cohort study of Veterans with at least 1 CTS primary care visit between 2010-2014

Independent Variable

- Non-Hispanic White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, or Other

Analysis

- Mixed-effects logistic regression incorporating multilevel factors using nested models

Outcomes

- Surgical Evaluation
- CTR
Total Cohort (n=165,976)

- **26%** Evaluated by a surgeon
- **12%** Received CTR

**Background:**

**Methods:**

**Results:**

**Conclusions:**
Background

Racial and ethnic disparities exist in surgical care for CTS in a national cohort of Veterans.

Methods

The strength of the association between surgical evaluation relative to CTR suggest barriers exist after surgical consult.

Results

Future work must support education, outreach, care coordination, and trust between hand surgeons and racial and ethnic minority patients.

Conclusions
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

• Thank you to my wonderful mentors in the field of hand surgery.

Dr. Rachel C. Hooper
Dr. Erika D. Sears
Dr. Kevin C. Chung