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Investigation of Nonresponse Bias in HHANES

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ABSTRACT

In the Mexican American portion of the Hispanic Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (HHANES) conducted during 1982-83, nonresponse to the examination accounted for 24% of the sample. This report investigates the potential for bias in these data due to nonresponse. Data from a household and medical history interview were used to investigate factors related to examination status. Several variables had a significant association with examination response status. Nonresponse and poststratification adjustments performed at the National Center for Health Statistics removed most of these factors as sources of bias. However, the economically depressed and medically underserved have a proportionately higher representation in the examined sample than in the interviewed sample than do their more well-to-do counterparts. A comparison of data for examinees in HHANES with data for Mexican Americans interviewed in the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) during 1982, 1983, and 1984 corroborates this finding—Mexican Americans in the NHIS were found to be representative of a more well-to-do and healthier population than were Mexican Americans responding to the HHANES examination.