Perceived Benefits and Barriers of Cervical Cancer Screening Among Chinese American Women

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Cervical cancer is the world’s second most common cancer among women in less developed regions, with an estimated 445,000 new cases in 2012 (World Health Organization, 2016). Cervical cancer was once a leading cause of death among American women in the United States; currently, it ranks 14th in the causes of female cancer mortality (National Institutes of Health [NIH], 2010). The rates of cervical cancer have greatly decreased in the United States since the introduction of Papanicolaou (Pap) screening in the 1950s, which identifies abnormal cells prior to the development of cervical cancer (NIH, 2010).

Despite the recognized benefits of regular Pap screening, Asian American women aged 18 years and older have the lowest Pap smear screening rate (68%) among U.S. racial and ethnic groups (compared to African Americans [78%], Hispanics [74%], non-Hispanic Caucasians [73%], and American Indians/Alaska Natives [73%]) (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2017).