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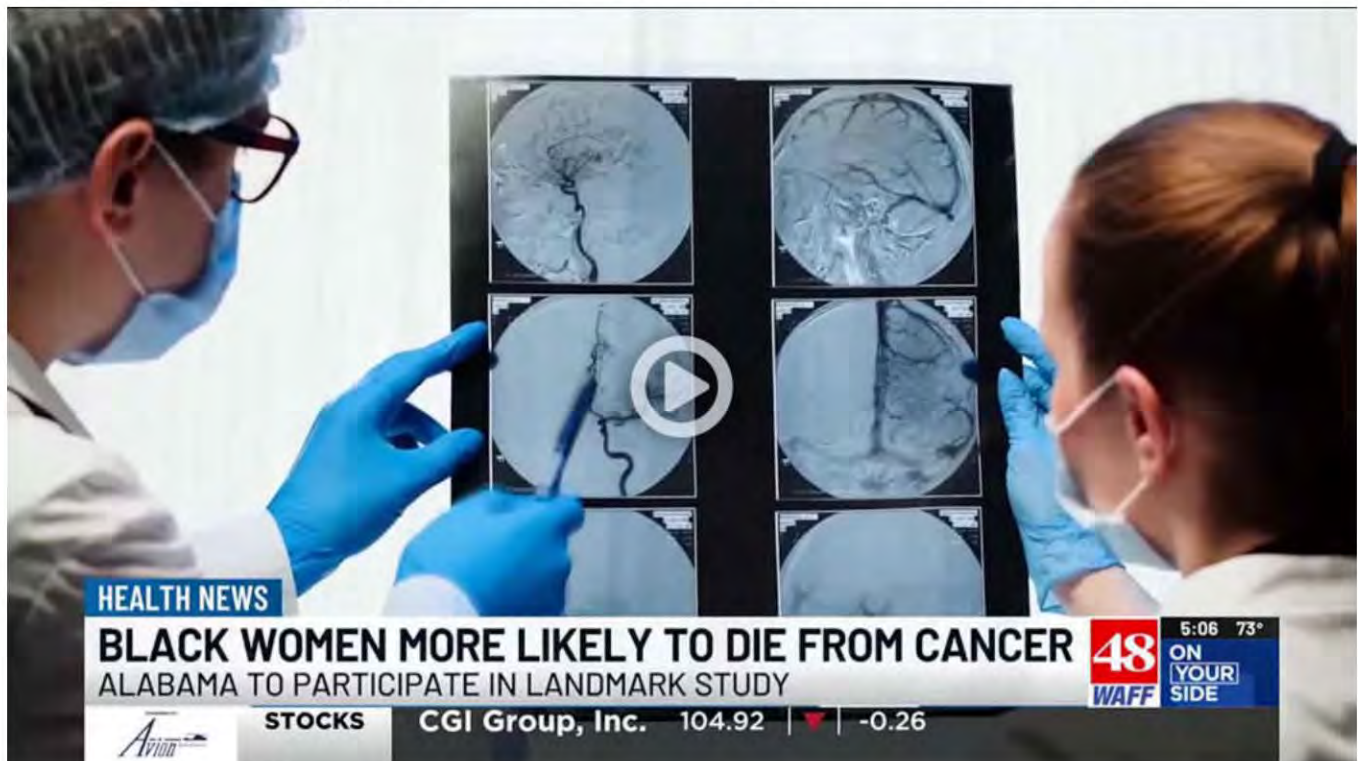
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## Alabama doctors urging Black women to participate in landmark study on cancer amid low survival rates



The American Cancer Society is asking Black women in Alabama to be part of a 30-year study on cancer.

By [Sean Dowling](#)

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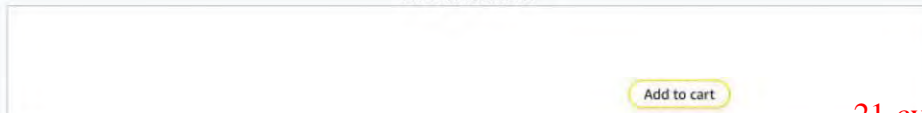
HUNTSVILLE, Ala. (WAFF) - The risk of dying from cancer has been declining in the U.S. over the last few decades, but Black women still have some of the [lowest survival rates](#).

That's why the [American Cancer Society](#) is launching the [largest study](#) of its kind to find out why that is, and leaders want thousands to participate, including those in Alabama.

Alabama is one of 20 states the American Cancer Society is targeting. Alabama's Black or African American population sits at [26.8%](#), according to the latest numbers from the U.S. Census Bureau.

The society is calling on cancer-free Black women, ages 25 to 55 to participate.

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For instance, breast cancer kills Black women at a [40% higher rate](#) than white women.

They're also [60% more likely to die of cervical cancer](#), and twice as likely to die of [endometrial cancer](#).

Dr. Karen Landers with the [Alabama Department of Public Health](#) is hopeful the study will shed light on health disparities that exist, but she wants people to know ADPH is here to help.

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"In my career, we've made a lot of progress in science and medicine, but we still have a long way to go in terms of ensuring that all persons have the ability to access these preventive medical services," Dr. Landers said. Preventive services like [Operation Wipe Out](#), which work to reduce preventable cervical cancer.

This is especially important to Dr. Landers who says Alabama is [third highest](#) in the nation for incidence and deaths from cervical cancer.

Dr. Landers wants patients to know about HPV immunization, screening and treatment of pre-cancer. She adds the takeaways from the study will only help healthcare systems moving forward.

"This particular study focusing on African American women is a very important study to me because it will really help us as we continue to refine and develop our programs in the Alabama Department of Public Health," Dr. Landers said.

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As for programs already in place, Dr. Landers adds, "We certainly have our office of health equity and we want to continue to focus on health equity for all populations. And in Alabama with our African American women representing a large portion of our population, we want them to have access to this because we want to save lives."

As for where things go from here, Dr. Landers hopes the start of the study is eye-opening to those in the healthcare industry, and patients around the country.

"I think a lot of this goes back to a history of health disparity," Dr. Landers said. "I think it's very important that we have people to access information, access education, and work through those barriers that have been present."

For its part, the Alabama Department of Public Health offers breast and cervical cancer screening programs based upon a person's income and age group, outreach through healthcare partners in various communities as well as faith-based community outreach programs.

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