

Assessing Modifiable Cancer Risk Factors within the Latinx LGBTQI+ Community

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Introduction

Approximately 1.7 million individuals identify as LGBTQI+ in California, and 31% of this population resides here in Los Angeles County alone.¹ Los Angeles County also hosts a majority Latinx population, with 48.6% identifying as Latinx.² Amidst the cross-section of both of these demographics, Latinx LGBTQI+ individuals are at much higher risk of developing cancer and suffering from greater health disparities due to financial and structural barriers, access to culturally competent providers, and a lack of equitable healthcare services.³

In association to the Human Papillomavirus (HPV), tobacco, and alcohol use, LGBTQI+ individuals are at higher risk of developing cervical, anal, and oral cancers.⁴ One factor that contributes to this higher risk is the lack of knowledge about the different modifiable lifestyle factors associate with cancer risk within the Latinx LGBTQI+ community. Little is also known about the differences in lifestyle factors between various gender identity and/or sexuality LGBTQI+ groups. Understanding these unique modifiable behaviors within the Latinx LGBTQI+ community will aid in developing culturally competent and equitable educational programs and materials.

Purpose

In 2017 the Latinx Task Force of Los Angeles County restructured its taskforce to collect data tailored to the Latinx LGBTQI+ community in Southern California. As a result of careful collaboration between two focus groups, the first needs assessment was conducted in 2018. This survey aimed to improve our understanding of the community's experience with cancer screening, prevention, risk reduction strategies, as well as their health seeking behaviors. From this survey, we also wanted to gain insight on the differences in lifestyle factors amongst the various gender identity and/or sexuality LGBTQI+ groups. This information will help improve our outreach and education efforts to best meet the needs of the Latinx LGBTQI+ community. Additionally, this information can be shared with similar community partners and health care providers, in order to increase knowledge and reduce structural barriers.

Methods

The 2018 online needs assessment survey was conducted using REDCap, a secure web-based application designed for research. Respondents were recruited via social media and at various outreach and education events throughout Southern California, with the direct help of partnering organizations who serve the Latinx LGBTQI+ community. Upon completion of the survey, respondents were entered to win a \$50 gift card. Statistical analysis was then conducted by exploring 13 lifestyle variables across both gender identity and sexuality. A sexuality variable was created, and each study variable was recoded into a binary variable with yes or no responses only.

Results

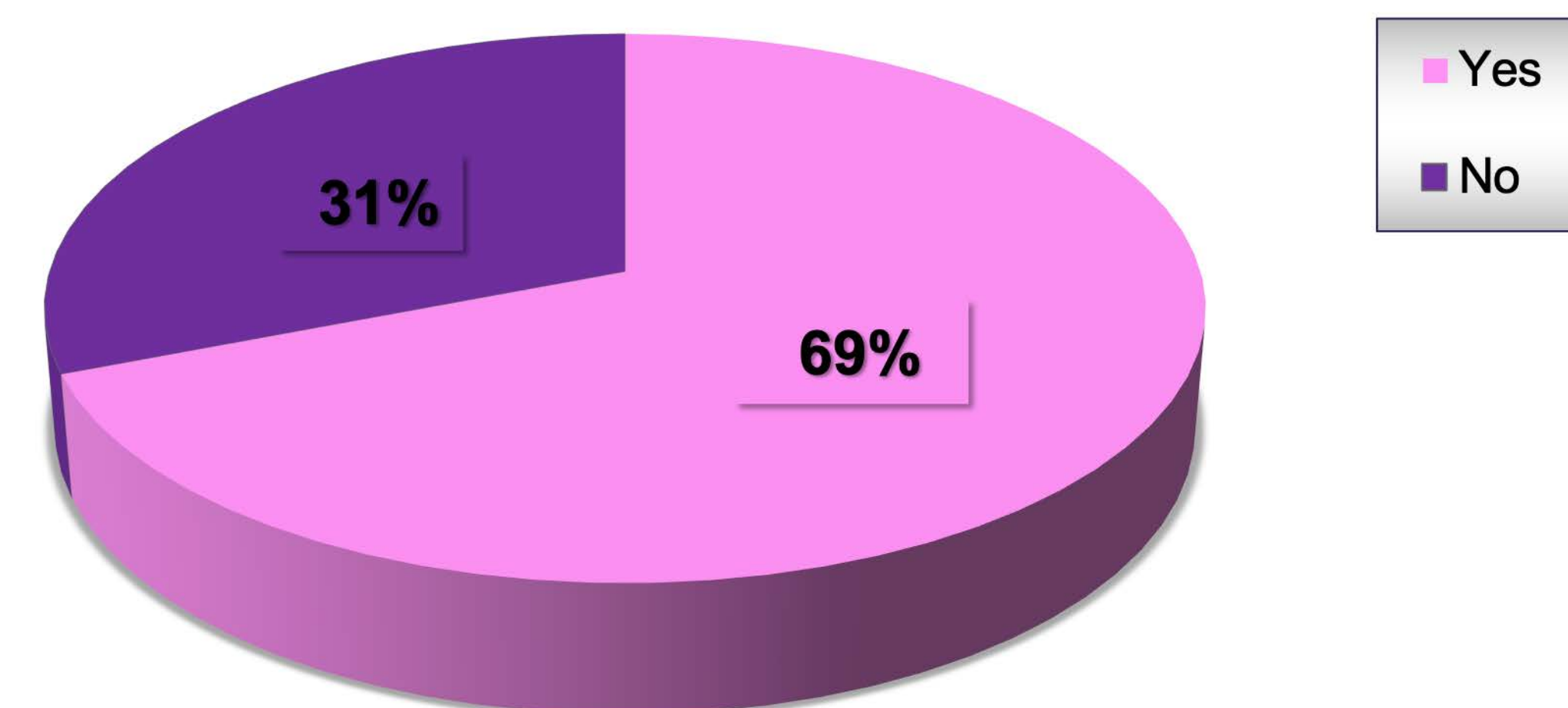
- ❑ A total of 176 (N=166) respondents completed the survey. Most (74%) were Latinx, between the ages of 21-39 (57%), identified as cisgender (82%), and identified as gay (40%)
- ❑ **69%** of respondents said that they have had 3 or more alcoholic drinks in one day.
- ❑ **Cisgender males** were **more likely** to have had **3 or more alcoholic drinks** in a day in the past year than **cisgender females** (χ^2 : 20.408, $p=0.002$).
- ❑ Although only 20.6 % of individuals indicated they used tobacco products in the past 30 days, **Trans women reported 26.92 higher odds** of using **tobacco** in the past 30 days compared to cisgender females. **Trans women** are also **more likely** to have used **tobacco** products in the past 30 days than cisgender females, cisgender males, and gender-fluid individuals (χ^2 : 15.982, $p=0.014$).
- ❑ Only **32.1%** of respondents reported eating 5 or more servings of fruit and vegetables a day.
- ❑ Just over half of respondents reported consuming red or processed meats 3 or more times a week. **Cisgender males** have **7.208 higher odds** of consuming red or processed meats at least 3 times a week compared to cisgender women.
- ❑ **88.5%** of respondents have been sexually active
- ❑ **78.2%** reported ever practicing unprotected sex. **Gay individuals** are **more likely** to have **practiced unprotected sex** than bisexual individuals.

Discussion

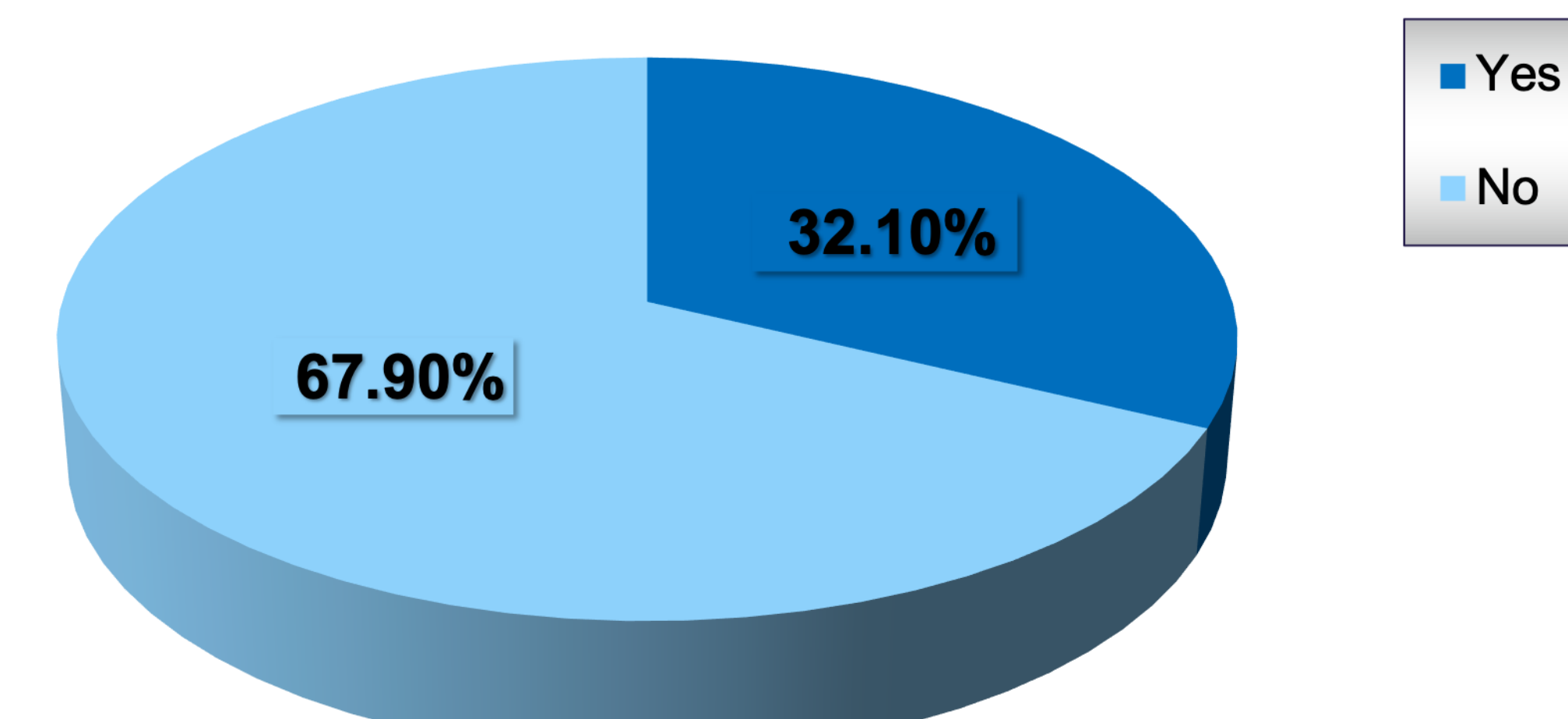
Results from the 2018 needs assessment survey indicate a critical need for improvement in the quality of health education opportunities in order to reduce the gaps in modifiable cancer risk within this community. Our results also suggest a need to improve the equity of lifestyle health education to better meet the needs of all gender identities and/or sexualities, rather than approaching Latinx LGBTQI+ individuals as a single constituency within healthcare.

As a result of our findings, one step we took towards creating more equitable and accurate LGBTQI+ cancer information was creating the flyer below titled, "Cancer Screening & Prevention Tips for the LGBTQI+ Community". This flyer is designed for distribution and evaluation purpose for the constituents associated with the Latinx Task Force. For the benefit of the Latinx LGBTQI+ community, we hope to continue examining the characteristics of lifestyle factors within this community. Additionally, future studies addressing the needs of sexual and gender minorities within specific demographics would also benefit focus groups such as ours so that we can develop a broader understanding of the disparities experienced within the Latinx LGBTQI+ community.

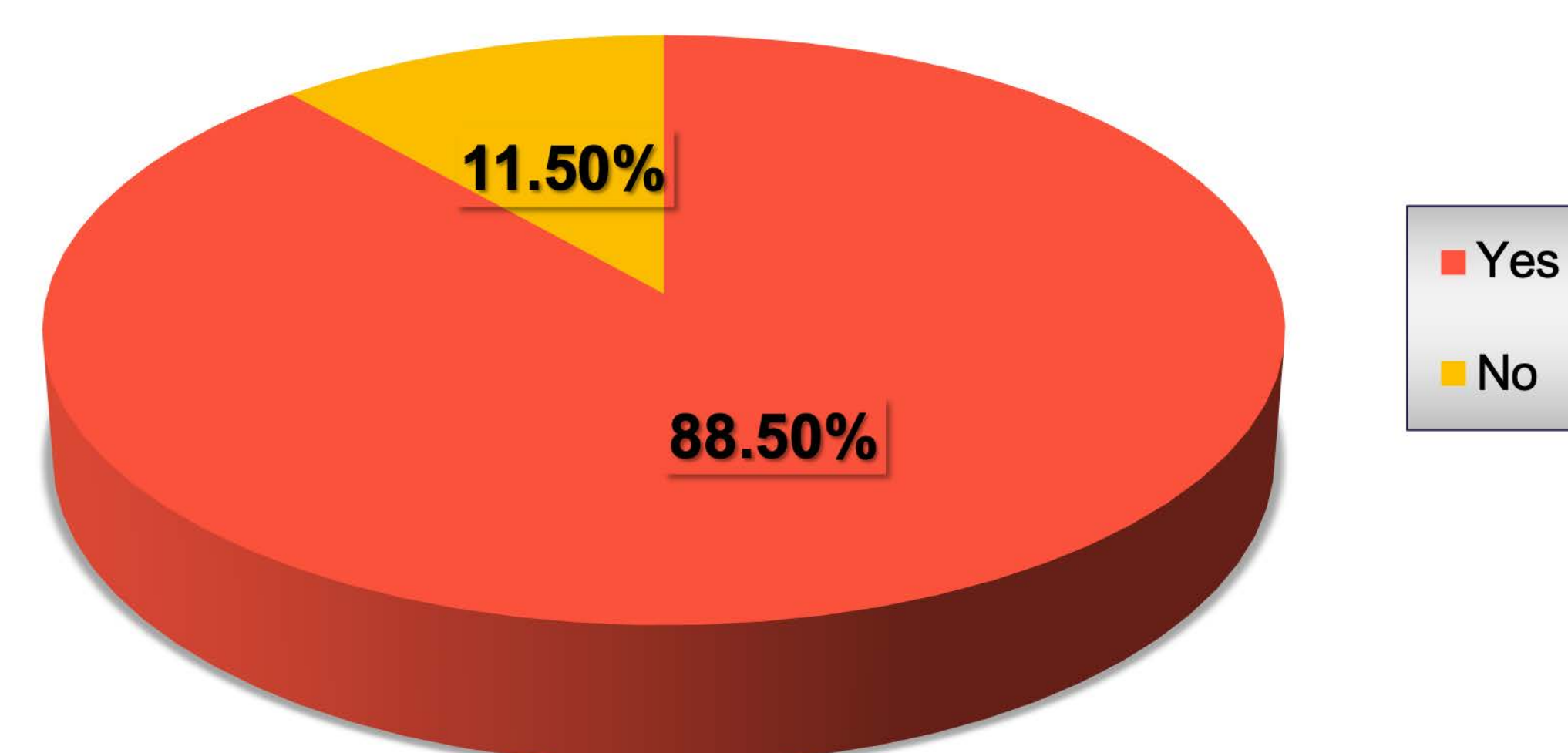
In the past year, have you had 3 or more alcoholic drinks in one day?



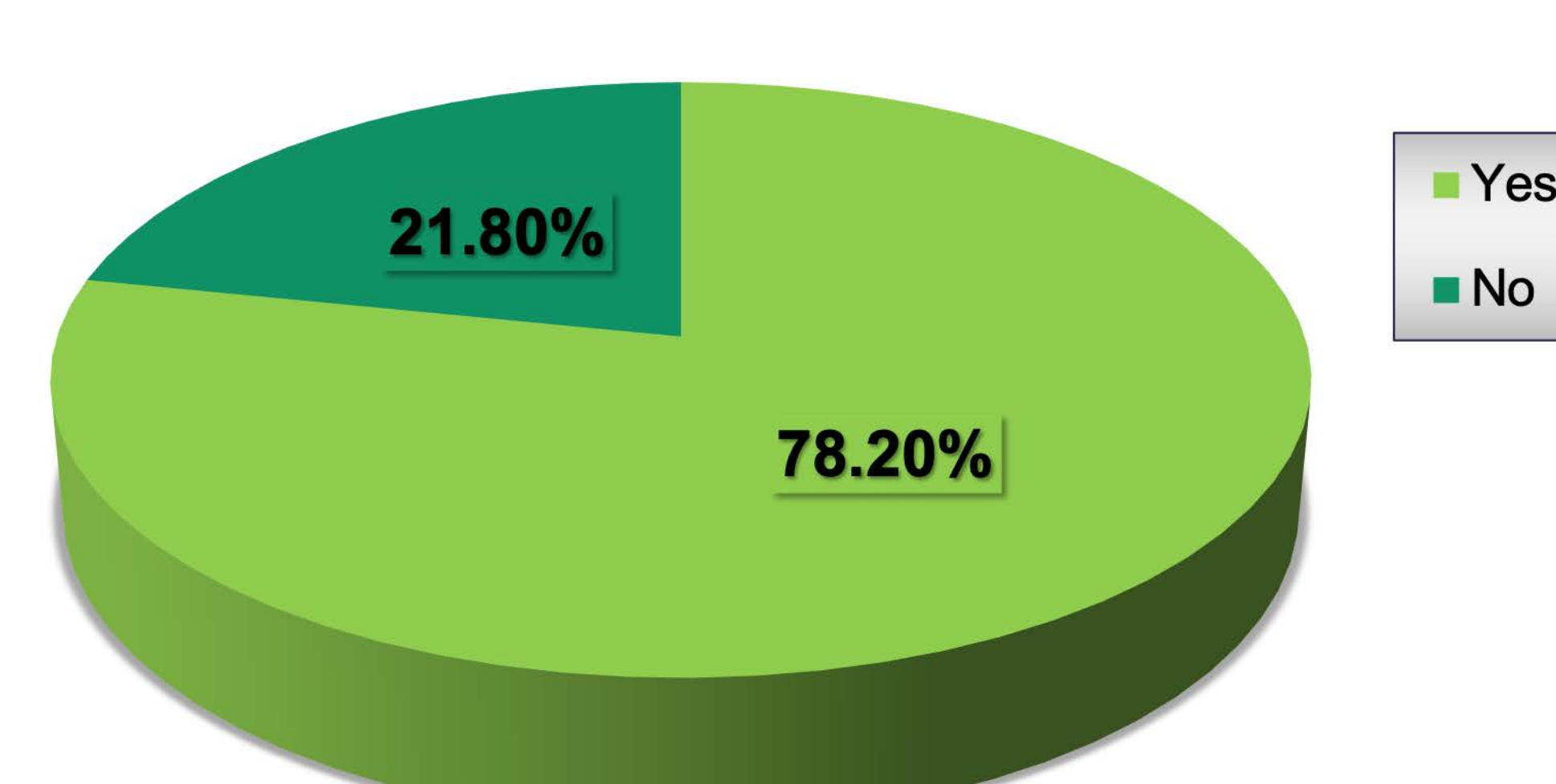
Do you eat 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables each day?



Have you ever been sexually active?



Have you ever practiced unprotected sex?



Acknowledgements

The Latinx Task Force is a volunteer driven coalition united in a common cause, working to promote community-wide health & wellness. We're comprised of professionals with diverse backgrounds, representing community and faith-based organizations, foundations, government, hospitals, universities and community clinics. Currently we represent the following agencies: ALAS para tu Salud/PALS for Health, Alinea Medical Imaging, American Cancer Society, California Health Collaborative, Cancer Legal Resource Center, Cedars Sinai, City of Hope, Planned Parenthood Pasadena and San Gabriel Valley, Promotoras y Promotores Foundation, University of California Los Angeles, University of Southern California, U.S. Food & Drug Administration, and the Wall Las Memorias Project.

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