

# Salud SOL!

## HCHS/SOL Newsletter



Volume 16, Issue 1

Hispanic Community Health Study/ Study of Latinos (HCHS/SOL)

## Environmental Health

Did you know that the neighborhood you live in could influence your health? It may also be a driver of health inequalities. Three ancillary studies (SOL Air, SOL Greenness, and SOL VIDA) from the Hispanic Community Health Study/Study of Latinos (HCHS/SOL) are working to learn more about how different environmental factors may specifically impact the health of Hispanics/Latinos.

### SOL Air

SOL Air is a study that measures neighborhood air quality, including pollutants from traffic. Poor air quality can make it hard to breathe, which can affect many aspects of health. SOL Air aims to learn whether Hispanics/Latinos who live in neighborhoods with poor air quality are more likely to have cardiovascular disease or type 2 diabetes. Investigators are also studying biological reasons that may explain how air quality influences these diseases.

SOL Air is also measuring opportunities for physical activity and healthy eating in neighborhoods where Hispanics/Latinos live. Some neighborhoods make it easier to stay fit and active when they are safe, have sidewalks & parks, and implement traffic control signs and devices to protect the community from traffic. People are also more likely to eat healthy when healthy and affordable foods are available nearby. Investigators aim to learn which neighborhood factors are important to support the health of Hispanics/Latinos.

### Greenness in San Diego Area

The green color shows areas with trees and vegetation. The maps show differences in levels of greenness across the Chula Vista area of San Diego, CA.



### Air Quality in Bronx Area

The darker red shading shows higher levels of nitrogen dioxide pollutants in the air. The map shows differences in levels of particulate matter across areas of Bronx, NY.

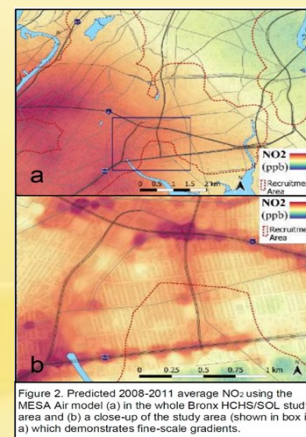


Figure 2. Predicted 2008-2011 average NO<sub>2</sub> using the MESA Air model (a) in the whole Bronx HCHS/SOL study area and (b) a close-up of the study area (shown in box in a) which demonstrates fine-scale gradients.

### SOL Greenness

SOL Greenness focuses on measuring green areas, such as trees, plants, and vegetation, in neighborhoods where Hispanic/Latinos live. Being around “greenness” and nature has been linked with better physical, mental, and cognitive health. SOL Greenness aims to learn whether Hispanics/Latinos who live in neighborhoods with less greenness are more likely to have cardiovascular disease or type 2 diabetes. Like with SOL Air, investigators are also studying biological reasons that may explain how greenness impacts these diseases. Some HCHS/SOL participants live in neighborhoods that had new trees planted, and investigators would like to learn whether this may lead to improved health in the long run.

HCHS/SOL investigators are specifically examining green spaces in Miami and San Diego. Participants will not be contacted for the SOL Greenness study since no additional information is needed beyond the health information already being provided through participation in HCHS/SOL.

#### Miami, Florida

305-243-1828



#### Bronx, New York

1-718-584-1563



#### Chicago, Illinois

1-800-749-4765



#### San Diego, California

1-619-205-1926



#### Coordinating Center

1-919-962-3254



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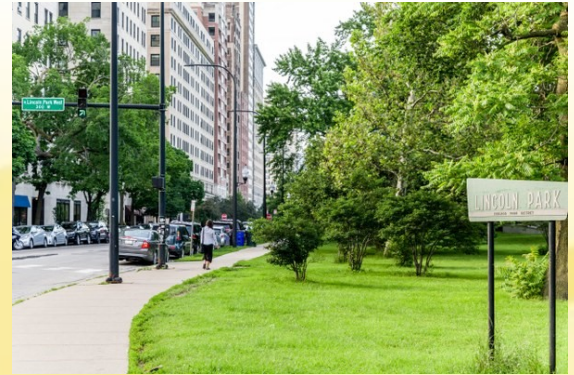


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### SOL VIDA

Variations in Daily Activity (SOL VIDA), measures hot spots of physical active and inactive time. A hot spot is an area where a large amount of exercise or physical activity occur. Examples of hot spots include parks or neighborhood sidewalks where people exercise. SOL VIDA is learning how physical activity hot spots can support health and how sedentary hot spots can harm Hispanic/Latino health. The hot spot information from SOL VIDA is also being used by the SOL Air and SOL Greenness investigators to better understand the relationship of hot spots with air quality and greenness. Combining information across the studies will help investigators learn even more about how environmental factors affect Hispanic/Latino health.



Example of a Hot Spot

### Capitol Hill in Washington, D.C.



### Informing Public Policy

Improving environmental health is complex because environmental factors are not determined by healthcare leaders. Instead, neighborhoods are usually created and maintained by city, county, and state officials who consider many things when making decisions related to a given neighborhood. However, government officials are not always aware of how their decisions may affect the community's health.

The findings from the HCHS/SOL research will help educate communities and government officials on how their decisions influence the health of Hispanics/Latinos. You can also influence policymaker decisions related to your neighborhood by sharing your voice. This can include attending community engagement meetings, working with neighborhood-based community organizations, and talking with your city officials or city council members.

If you are interested in participating in the SOL Air or SOL VIDA ancillary studies, please reach us at **[Field Center #]** to inquire if you are eligible.

### HCHS/SOL Reminders:

**Annual Follow Up Interviews:** We continue calling for your annual interview to learn about changes in your health and to update your records of hospitalizations and emergency room visits. Call us at **[Field Center #]** if you haven't heard from us in the last 6 months.

**In-Person Visit 3 and Ancillary Studies:** Participants who complete the Visit 3 (V3) examination qualify to participate in other SOL ancillary studies. Each SOL ancillary study focuses on a particular health topic impacting the Hispanic/Latino community, such as: cardiovascular disease, physical activity, memory decline, sleep disorders, among others. These studies are currently enrolling or will begin soon. Call us at **[Field Center #]** for more information.

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