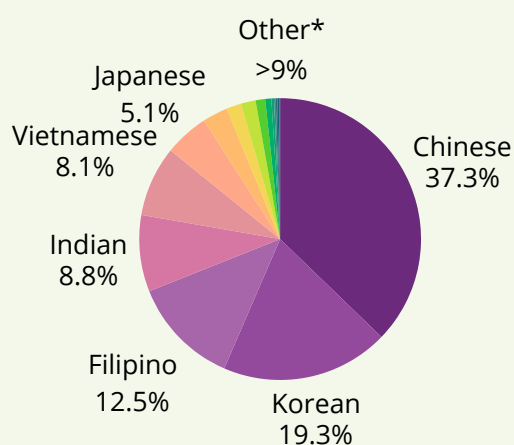




Study Updates

2241

ASPIRE participants completed their first survey



933

ASPIRE participants completed their second survey

ASPIRE Study Participants
(as of 8/28/2026)

August happenings

This month, we're honored to share the story of Community Advisory Board member Vicky Ni, a lung cancer survivor diagnosed seven years ago. We are grateful for the insight that she and our other advisory board members bring to our team.

We're also excited to announce the integration of the Hmong language to the ASPIRE study portal, expanding language access so more community members can participate.

ASPIRE ON THE ROAD

Ching Wong, Community Advisory Board member, is on the road from Maine to California in his ASPIRE van. If you see him, please say (or honk) hello!



*Other groups include Cambodian, Thai, Bangladeshi, Hmong, Burmese, Indonesian, Laotian, Pakistani, and Sri Lankan.

Vicky Ni: Living with Lung Cancer

by Ivana Ma

Before her diagnosis, Vicky was a busy working mom. With two girls in middle school, she was juggling work, motherhood, and had just gotten a promotion. About a year and a half later, she was diagnosed with lung cancer. Without any history of lung cancer in her family and being a nonsmoker, this was completely unexpected. It started as a pain in the base of her right shoulder blade before a pulmonologist drew fluid from her lung, which resulted in a definitive diagnosis.

To Vicky “it was a total surprise, and it took me a year, probably, to process, and my main concern has always been just looking out for my daughters.”

Despite her initial surprise, her family rallied around her and her treatments. In the seven years since her diagnosis, Vicky has faced many changes. “The earlier treatments left me tired, for the most part, but I was able to function.” She was still able to take trips and she gave away some of responsibilities at work. She had to do less at home, and her husband had to pick up more, but she was largely able to be fairly normal for about five years. Then in the sixth year, Vicky started chemo and that “really slowed me down even more.”

Reflecting on her experiences living with lung cancer, Vicky considers herself relatively lucky to have discovered her diagnosis. Compared

to breast cancer where mammograms are standard, “there's almost nothing that I could have done to prevent the situation that I was in because I would never qualify for any of the screenings, because I'm not a smoker.”

Current guidelines recommend annual lung cancer screening for adults ages 50 to 80 who have a 20 pack-year smoking history and currently smoke or have quit within the past 15 years. [1] However, over half of Asian American women diagnosed with lung cancer have never smoked with as high as 80% among Chinese and Asian Indian American women. [2]



Vicky and
her husband

As a current member of the ASPIRE community advisory board, she advocates for research and awareness. “Because I was busy as a working mom, I didn't prioritize my own health, and just figured it would just kind of go away. So I would say

that people should listen to their bodies, have everything checked out, and keep advocating for yourself.”

References

1. US Preventive Services Task Force. Screening for Lung Cancer: US Preventive Services Task Force Recommendation Statement. JAMA. 2021;325(10):962–970.
2. Gomez SL, et al. Elevated risk of lung cancer among Asian American women who have never smoked: an emerging cancer disparity. JNCI. 2025 Jun 1;117(6):1104-1109.



Learn more about the
ASPIRE Cohort Study



<https://aspirecohort.ucsf.edu/>

Have any questions about the study?
Reach out!



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