

Childhood cancer survivors less likely to marry, researchers find

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Adult survivors of childhood cancer are 20 to 25 percent more likely to never marry compared with siblings and the general population, Yale School of Medicine researchers report in a new study published in *Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers & Prevention*, a journal of the American Association for Cancer Research.

Nina Kadan-Lottick, M.D., assistant professor of pediatrics at Yale School of Medicine, and colleagues studied almost 9,000 adult survivors of [childhood cancer](#) participating in the multisite Childhood Cancer Survivor Study. The team evaluated the frequency of marriage and divorce rates among survivors compared with their sibling groups in the U.S. Census data. Participants completed mailed surveys every two to three years on their health and psychosocial status in an ongoing study.

Results showed that an estimated 42 percent of survivors were married, 7.3 percent were separated or divorced and 46 percent were never married. Patients who were previously treated for a brain tumor were 50 percent more likely than [siblings](#) and the general U.S. population to never marry. Of the childhood [cancer survivors](#) who did marry, divorce patterns were similar to their peers.

"Our findings suggest that in addition to the long-term physical effects of cancer, such as short stature, poor physical functioning and cognitive problems, social implications also exist," said Kadan-Lottick, who is a member of Yale Cancer Center.

Kadan-Lottick estimates that over 80 percent of children with cancer will be cured of their disease. She and her colleagues conducted the study to measure long-term outcomes in this growing population of childhood cancer survivors. Marriage is one of the indicators of an adult's integration in society.

"Studies such as ours are important to understand how childhood cancer survivors function in our society," said Lottick. "Separate studies are underway to better understand factors that contribute to other adult benchmarks such as living independently, achieving higher education and personal income."

Source: Yale University ([news](#) : [web](#))

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