

# Childhood survivors of CNS cancers and leukemia have lowered educational attainment

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Childhood cancer survivors who had brain or other central nervous system cancers, or leukemia, achieve lower-than-expected educational success compared with the general public, according to an article published online January 27 in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*.

This study was undertaken because previous studies on educational attainment among childhood cancer survivors were small, had contradictory findings, or were not population-based.

E.R. Lancashire, of the Centre for Childhood Cancer Survivor Studies, School of Health and Population Sciences, at the University of Birmingham in the UK, and colleagues investigated educational attainment among a cohort of over 10,000 5-year survivors of all types of childhood cancer who had completed a British Childhood Cancer Survivor Study questionnaire. Educational attainment at two levels of secondary school (advanced and ordinary levels) up to the highest level of education was considered. Results were compared with data from the general population obtained from the General Household Survey of Great Britain.

Overall, survivors of childhood [cancer](#) experience a deficit in educational attainment compared with the general public. Specifically, only those who had [central nervous system](#) neoplasms, especially if they

had received radiation to the head, and [leukemia](#) survivors receiving similar treatment, performed worse than the general population. These differences were substantial and statistically significant.

"These results provide grounds for concern for survivors of CNS neoplasms and those with leukemia who were cranially irradiated, as well as reassurance regarding educational attainment among all other survivors," the authors write.

Provided by Journal of the National Cancer Institute

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