

Communication factors aid cancer diagnosis disclosure

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(HealthDay)—Ensuring disclosure of a gynecological cancer diagnosis takes place in a private setting and that the conversation lasts for more than 10 minutes improves patient satisfaction, according to a study published online Oct. 7 in *Obstetrics & Gynecology*.

Lindsay M. Kuroki, M.D., from the Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, and colleagues surveyed 100 gynecologic oncology patients (between December 2011 and September 2012) using an 83-item tool based on evaluated patient-centered factors, physician behavior and communication skills, and environmental factors.

The researchers found that 24 percent of patients were notified of their diagnosis by phone, 60 percent in the physician's office, and 16 percent in the hospital. Results were reported by either an obstetrician-gynecologist (58 percent), gynecologic oncologist (26 percent), primary care physician (8 percent), or other (8 percent). A support person was present for 52 percent of patients. Face-to-face [disclosure](#), a private setting, and duration of the encounter of greater than 10 minutes were associated with higher patient satisfaction scores. When adjusting for other factors, both physician communication skills and patient-centered factors (including perception of physician sensitivity and empathy, opportunities to ask questions and express emotion, and setting the pace of [conversation](#)) were also associated with higher patient satisfaction.

"Effective physician communication skills and patient-centered factors resulted in higher [patient satisfaction](#) with the gynecologic cancer diagnosis disclosure experience," the authors write.

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