

Cancer patients need anxiety, depression screening

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(HealthDay)—It is important to recognize and treat anxiety or depression among cancer patients, according to a clinical guideline published online April 14 in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology*.

Barbara L. Andersen, Ph.D., from The Ohio State University in Columbus, and colleagues evaluated and adapted the pan-Canadian guideline clinical practice guidelines. Overall, the American Society of Clinical Oncology panel deemed the recommendations clear, thorough, based on the most relevant scientific evidence, and presented with options that will be acceptable to patients. However, the panel adapted some of the recommendations based on local context and practice beliefs.

The panel recommends that all patients with cancer be evaluated for symptoms of depression and anxiety periodically throughout care. Validated, published measures and procedures should be used for assessments. Different treatment pathways are recommended depending on symptom level. The risk for poor quality of life and potential disease-related morbidity and mortality is increased by the failure to identify and treat anxiety and depression.

"Although clinicians may not be able to prevent some of the chronic or late medical effects of cancer, they have a vital role in mitigating the negative emotional and behavioral sequelae," the authors write.

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