

Travel time can hamper follow-up chemo, study says

August 25 2015



The farther the location, the less likely patients got treatment after cancer surgery.

(HealthDay)—The farther they have to travel, the less likely cancer patients are to receive follow-up chemotherapy after surgery, a new study finds.

This type of treatment, called adjuvant chemotherapy, is recommended for many patients after surgery to reduce the chance of cancer returning.

This study looked at nearly 34,700 patients across the United States who had surgery for [colon cancer](#), and found that nearly 76 percent received adjuvant chemotherapy within 90 days of surgery.

Compared to patients who had to travel less than 12.5 miles to

appointments, those who had to travel 50 to 249 miles were 13 percent less likely to receive chemotherapy. And those who had to travel 250 miles or more were nearly two-thirds less likely to receive chemotherapy.

The findings applied to patients with and without insurance, according to the study published online Aug. 24 in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology*.

"While it is reassuring that most patients in this study received [adjuvant chemotherapy](#) on time, the fact that patients traveling more than 50 miles were less likely to receive chemotherapy, regardless of insurance status, is concerning," said lead author Chun Chieh Lin, senior epidemiologist at the American Cancer Society, in a journal news release.

"It tells us expanded insurance coverage, while important, might not fully address the barriers to patients receiving guideline-recommended treatment," Lin added.

More information: The U.S. National Library of Medicine has more about [cancer chemotherapy](#).

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Citation: Travel time can hamper follow-up chemo, study says (2015, August 25) retrieved 20 March 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-08-hamper-follow-up-chemo.html>

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