

# Retinoblastoma mortality up with eye-preserving radiotherapy

July 11 2016

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(HealthDay)—Short-term survival of heritable retinoblastoma is high,

but long-term mortality remains a challenge, according to a study published online July 5 in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology*.

Petra Temming, M.D., from University Hospital Essen in Germany, and colleagues analyzed data from 633 German [children](#) treated at the national reference center for heritable retinoblastoma in order to identify the impact of eye-preserving therapy on long-term survival.

The researchers found that the five-year overall survival of children diagnosed in Germany with heritable retinoblastoma from 1940 to 2008 was 93.2 percent. Long-term mortality was increased in those with heritable disease versus those with nonheritable disease. Overall survival correlated with tumor staging, and 92 percent of [patients](#) were diagnosed with a favorable tumor stage. While five-year overall survival in patients with stage 0 or 1 was 97.4 percent, only 79.5 percent of these patients survived 40 years after diagnosis. In children treated with eye-preserving radiotherapy, long-term overall survival was reduced versus those treated with enucleation alone. Adding chemotherapy aggravated this effect.

"The benefits of preserving vision must be balanced with the impact of eye-preserving treatments on long-term survival in heritable retinoblastoma, and the genetic background of the patient influences choice of eye-preserving treatment," conclude the authors. Three authors disclosed financial ties to pharmaceutical companies.

**More information:** [Abstract](#)  
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Citation: Retinoblastoma mortality up with eye-preserving radiotherapy (2016, July 11) retrieved 7 May 2024 from

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