

# Mental distress common in survivors of teen, young adult CA

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(HealthDay)—Survivors of adolescent and young adult (AYA) cancer

are more likely to have mental distress than individuals without cancer, but most do not talk to mental health professionals, according to a study published online Nov. 17 in *Cancer*.

Using data from the 2013 to 2014 National Health Interview Surveys, Sapna Kaul, Ph.D., from the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, and colleagues identified 875 AYA cancer survivors who were diagnosed between the ages of 15 and 39 years and were at least five years from their initial diagnosis. A comparison group was created, and correlations with distress were examined among the two groups.

The researchers found that survivors more often reported [mental distress](#) (moderate: 23.2 versus 16.9 percent; severe: 8.4 versus 3.0 percent). Survivors more often cited not being able to afford [mental health](#) care (6.4 versus 2.3 percent). Of the survivors with moderate and severe distress, 74.7 and 52.2 percent, respectively, had not talked to a mental health professional. Survivors who were current smokers reported severe distress more often than nonsmokers (relative risk, 3.59), in contrast to the comparison group. Among survivors, having public and no insurance versus private insurance and reporting sleep-related trouble within the previous week correlated with greater distress.

"Survivors need greater access to mental health screening and counseling to address the current gaps in care delivery," the authors write.

**More information:** [Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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