

App personalizes impact of delayed cancer treatment

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Cancer cell during cell division. Credit: National Institutes of Health

(HealthDay)—The OncCOVID web application may allow clinicians to personalize assessment of the impact of delaying cancer treatment during the COVID-19 pandemic, according to a study published online Oct. 29

in *JAMA Oncology*.

Holly E. Hartman, from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, and colleagues integrated cancer mortality estimates and data on the consequences of treatment delay to aid [treatment decisions](#) and improve [patient outcomes](#). The model used age-specific and stage-specific estimates of overall survival pre-COVID-19, which were adjusted for the probability of COVID-19 (individualized by county, treatment-specific variables, hospital exposure frequency, and COVID-19 infectivity estimates), COVID-19 mortality (individualized by age-specific, comorbidity-specific, and treatment-specific variables), and delay of [cancer treatment](#) (impact and duration).

The researchers report that the OncCOVID web application allows for the selection of up to 47 individualized variables to assess net survival for an individual patient with cancer. There was substantial heterogeneity noted in the association between delayed cancer treatment and net survival among patients with a given cancer type and stage. These two variables were insufficient to discriminate the net impact of immediate versus delayed treatment. However, there was an association seen between individualized overall survival estimates and patient age, number of comorbidities, treatment received, and specific local community estimates of COVID-19 risk.

"The OncCOVID web application may allow clinicians to estimate the net impact of delayed [cancer](#) treatment for individual patients and to prioritize patients for immediate treatment in settings with limited treatment capacity," the authors write.

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