

SARS-CoV-2 infection rate low in patients receiving antitumor therapy

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(HealthDay)—The rate of severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus

2 (SARS-CoV-2) infection is 0.68 percent among patients receiving antitumor treatment, according to a research letter published online Dec. 17 in *JAMA Oncology*.

Carlo Aschele, M.D., Ph.D., from Ospedale Sant'Andrea in La Spezia, Italy, and colleagues calculated the rate of SARS-CoV-2 [infection](#) among patients receiving antitumor treatment at 118 medical oncology units affiliated with the Collegio Italiano dei Primari Oncologi Medici Ospedalieri in Italy. Data were included for 59,989 patients receiving antitumor treatment between Jan. 15 and May 4, 2020.

The researchers found that 406 of the patients (0.68 percent) developed COVID-19 and had a positive nasopharyngeal polymerase chain reaction test result. Most infected patients (83 percent) were symptomatic and 77 percent required hospitalization. The most common tumor was [lung cancer](#) (22 percent) and the most represented antitumor treatment was chemotherapy (62 percent). Compared with the general Italian population during the same time period, the infection rate was higher and varied between different geographical areas.

"From a clinical point of view, the low probability of SARS-CoV-2 infection among these patients (

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