

Studies examines characteristics of patients with cancer who died by suicide

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Individuals with cancer face a higher risk of suicide than people in the general population, but little is known about the characteristics of patients with cancer who have died by suicide. A new study published in *Psycho-Oncology* compared the characteristics of suicide cases with and without cancer.

Among 14,446 suicide cases between 2003 and 2017 in Hong Kong, 10% had a history of cancer. Compared with non-cancer cases, patients with cancer were generally older and less likely to live alone; more likely to use violent methods; less likely to have histories of physical and [psychiatric problems](#); and more likely to communicate about their suicidal intent before death.

"Patients with cancer suffer from more than [physical pain](#)—we should also care about their mental and social well-being. It is crucial to advocate for suicide prevention to their caregivers and [healthcare professionals](#) during the treatment process," said senior author Paul S.F. Yip, Ph.D., of The University of Hong Kong.

More information: Vera Y. Men et al, Characteristics of cancer patients who died by suicide: A quantitative study of 15-year coronial records, *Psycho-Oncology* (2021). [DOI: 10.1002/pon.5634](https://doi.org/10.1002/pon.5634)

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