

AACR addresses impact of COVID-19 on cancer care continuum

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(HealthDay)—The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the continuum of

cancer care, according to a report from the American Association of Cancer Research (AACR) published online Feb. 9.

Researchers from the AACR evaluated the impact of COVID-19 on [cancer care](#), including the burden of COVID-19 among patients with cancer and challenges presented by the pandemic to [cancer research](#) and [patient care](#).

The authors note that in 2020 in the United States, the risk for COVID-19 infection was seven times higher for patients diagnosed with cancer versus those with no history of cancer. COVID-19 vaccines are effective in most patients with cancer; however, those with certain types of blood cancers and/or receiving specific anticancer treatments have a reduced response to vaccines and remain vulnerable to COVID-19 infection.

Effects of the pandemic on the cancer care continuum include a reduction in cancer screening, which may lead to increased diagnosis at more advanced stages. Strategies to raise awareness of the importance of preventive health care are critical for reducing the potential impact of delayed screening.

The pandemic has also impacted treatment regimens, with some patients needing to delay or postpone treatment. Furthermore, pandemic-related social isolation and financial stress have negatively impacted the mental and physical health of cancer patients, their caregivers, and cancer survivors.

Some of the lessons from COVID-19 have the potential to improve cancer care, including the adoption of telemedicine, adaptations to facilitate participation in clinical trials, and modifications to treatment regimens.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of basic science, cancer prevention, cancer screenings, and addressing cancer disparities," Margaret Foti, Ph.D., M.D., (hc), chief executive officer of AACR, said in a statement.

More information: The [AACR report is available here](#).

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