

New study shows adolescent and young adult cancer survivors face increased cancer incidence and mortality risk

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New findings led by researchers at the American Cancer Society (ACS) show that five-year survivors of adolescent and young adult (AYA) cancer in the United States have a higher risk of developing and nearly

double the risk of dying from a new primary cancer as the general population. The study was published today in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*.

"The risk of subsequent primary cancer among [cancer survivors](#) has been extensively studied among [childhood cancer survivors](#), but relatively less is known about AYA cancer survivors," said Dr. Hyuna Sung, principal scientist, cancer surveillance research at the American Cancer Society and lead author of the study. "These results strongly stress the need to expand research on and strengthen efforts for surveillance of subsequent cancers among childhood and AYA cancer survivors, as well as develop age-specific, exposure-based, and risk-stratified prevention strategies in this growing population of survivors."

In this study, researchers sought to provide a comprehensive profile of the risk of developing and dying from subsequent cancers among survivors of 29 AYA cancers diagnosed during ages 15-39. The analysis included more than 170,000 individuals in 9 Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results registries who survived five years since their initial [cancer diagnosis](#) from 1975 to 2013 in the U.S. Thirty-five years post-cancer diagnosis, one in seven survivors developed new cancer and one in 16 survivors died from new cancer. The risk among survivors overall compared with the general population was 25% higher for cancer incidence and 84% higher for cancer death. The types of subsequent primary cancer and the magnitude of the risk varied substantially by the first cancer type. However, female breast, lung, and [colorectal cancers](#) were the most common, constituting 36% of all subsequent cancers and 39% of all subsequent cancer deaths. Lung cancer alone represented 11% of all subsequent cancers and 24% of all deaths from subsequent cancers.

"These findings underscore the critical role of providing high-quality post-treatment survivorship care to reduce the risk of subsequent

cancers," Sung said. "Given the younger age at diagnosis, there often should be more opportunities for prevention and early detection of subsequent cancers in this [survivor](#) group. However, preventing and managing such risk requires knowledge of its impact and optimal risk-based screening in place. Access to easily understood information and tailored resources based on survivors' history of [cancer](#) are needed to support survivors to navigate survivorship care and maximize wellness as they age."

More information: Hyuna Sung et al, Subsequent primary cancer risk among five-year survivors of adolescent and young adult cancers, *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* (2022). [DOI: 10.1093/jnci/djac091](#)

Provided by American Cancer Society

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