

Review looks at psychological burden of children, young adult cancer patients

June 29 2023, by Elana Gotkine



Children, adolescent, and young adult patients with cancer (CYACs)

may experience long-term psychological burden, according to a review published online June 22 in *JAMA Pediatrics* to coincide with the MASCC/JASCC/ISOO 2023 Annual Meeting, held from June 22 to 24 in Nara, Japan.

Ainsley Ryan Yan Bin Lee, M.B.B.S., from Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine in Singapore, and colleagues conducted a systematic literature review and meta-analysis to examine the risk, severity, and [risk factors](#) for depression, anxiety, psychotic disorders, and suicide in CYACs and a noncancer comparator group. Data were included from 52 studies.

The researchers found that, compared with matched controls and siblings, CYACs were at increased lifetime risk of severe symptoms or a disorder of depression, anxiety, and [psychotic disorders](#) (risk ratios, 1.57, 1.29, and 1.56, respectively). There was no significant increase observed in overall suicide mortality. CYACs receiving treatment and long-term survivors showed increased severity of depression (standardized mean differences, 0.44 and 0.18, respectively). The mean severity of anxiety was only increased during treatment (standardized mean difference, 0.16).

"It is imperative for [policy makers](#) and [health care professionals](#) to be cognizant of vulnerable subgroups who may develop severe psychiatric and psychological comorbidity," the authors write. "Timely identification, preventive efforts, and psycho-oncological intervention in vulnerable groups especially at risk are recommended."

More information: Ainsley Ryan Yan Bin Lee et al, Lifetime Burden of Psychological Symptoms, Disorders, and Suicide Due to Cancer in Childhood, Adolescent, and Young Adult Years, *JAMA Pediatrics* (2023). [DOI: 10.1001/jamapediatrics.2023.2168](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamapediatrics.2023.2168)

Abby R. Rosenberg et al, Poor Mental Health Among Survivors of

Childhood Cancer—Risk Factors and a Call for Intervention, *JAMA Pediatrics* (2023). [DOI: 10.1001/jamapediatrics.2023.2162](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamapediatrics.2023.2162)

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