

# Overall incidence rate of pediatric cancer increased from 2003 to 2019

July 13 2023, by Elana Gotkine

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The overall incidence rate of pediatric cancer increased on average from

2003 to 2019, peaking in 2016, according to a study published online July 11 in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute*.

David A. Siegel, M.D., M.P.H., from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, and colleagues updated cancer incidence rates and trends using data from U.S. Cancer Statistics for children and adolescents aged younger than 20 years diagnosed with [malignant tumors](#) during 2003 to 2019.

A total of 248,749 cases were reported during 2003 to 2019, for an overall cancer incidence rate of 178.3 per 1 million. The researchers found that the incidence rates were highest for leukemia, central nervous system (CNS) neoplasms, and lymphoma (46.6, 30.8, and 27.3, respectively). Boys, children aged 0 to 4 years, non-Hispanic White [children](#) and adolescents, and those in the Northeast census region, the top 25 percent of counties by [economic status](#), and metropolitan counties with a population of 1 million or more had the highest rates.

On average, from 2003 to 2019, the overall incidence rate of pediatric cancer increased 0.5 percent per year, with the rate increasing during 2003 to 2016 and then decreasing during 2016 to 2019 (annual percentage change, 1.1 and -2.1 percent, respectively). Increases were seen in the rates of leukemia, lymphoma, hepatic tumors, bone tumors, and thyroid carcinomas during 2003 to 2019, while the rates of melanoma decreased. The rates of CNS neoplasms increased until 2017, then decreased.

"For some [cancer types](#), further investigation is needed to better understand factors that might affect increases and decreases in trends," the authors write.

**More information:** David A Siegel et al, Counts, incidence rates, and trends of pediatric cancer in the United States, 2003-2019, *JNCI*:

*Journal of the National Cancer Institute* (2023). DOI: [10.1093/jnci/djad115](https://doi.org/10.1093/jnci/djad115)

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