

Researchers discuss reassessing COVID-19 precautions in 2023

September 28 2023



Credit: Pixabay/CC0 Public Domain

A new editorial paper titled "[Reassessing the risks and benefits of](#)

[COVID-19 precautions in 2023](#)" has been published in *Oncotarget*.

The COVID-19 pandemic has killed over one million Americans, with many dying during the omicron wave. By now most Americans have either had COVID-19 and/or been vaccinated against it. Despite the availability of updated immunizations, only 16.7% of Americans are now up-to-date on bivalent boosters. In their new editorial, researchers Thomas A. Ollila, Rashida Taher and Prashanth Moku from the Alpert Medical School of Brown University and Rhode Island Hospital discuss the current state of COVID-19 treatment.

"At our [cancer center](#), we treat many patients with hematologic malignancies, most of whom are older adults," the researchers note.

Patients with [hematologic malignancies](#), especially lymphoma, are at [increased risk](#) of poor response to vaccination and worse outcomes from COVID-19 infection. The researchers state that most of their patients have been abundantly cautious since the onset of the pandemic and some have avoided ever becoming infected. Patients in their clinic frequently inquire about the safety of being outdoors, spending time with their families during large gatherings (Christmas, Thanksgiving, etc.), and methods to prevent the contraction of COVID-19.

"Despite these precautions, too many patients reached remission from cancer only to then perish from COVID-19 in the first years of the pandemic," the researchers observe.

The concerns behind their questions are very real, but understanding how to best answer them is not always easy and their abundance of caution is not without cost. Grandchildren's birthdays went uncelebrated, weddings were forgone, and memorable moments with loved ones were lost. With both aging and malignancy, an acute awareness of the limited days means that there may not be years ahead to make up for all that was

missed.

"Although COVID-19 continues to pose a serious threat, medical advancements have now allowed for a more in-depth risk-benefit discussion to weigh the risk of infection versus the challenges of social isolation," the research team notes.

More information: Thomas A. Ollila et al, Reassessing the risks and benefits of COVID-19 precautions in 2023, *Oncotarget* (2023). [DOI: 10.18632/oncotarget.28468](https://doi.org/10.18632/oncotarget.28468)

Provided by Impact Journals LLC

Citation: Researchers discuss reassessing COVID-19 precautions in 2023 (2023, September 28) retrieved 5 July 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2023-09-discuss-reassessing-covid-precautions.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--