

# Poor physical function persists in childhood cancer survivors

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Despite changes in therapy, the prevalence of poor physical function has remained steady among childhood survivors of acute lymphoblastic leukemia (ALL) and non-Hodgkin lymphoma (NHL), according to a

study published online Nov. 8 in the *Journal of Cancer Survivorship*.

Carmen L. Wilson, from St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis, Tennessee, and colleagues examined the prevalence of reduced function among ALL and NHL survivors by treatment era. The analysis included 6,511 survivors of childhood ALL and NHL and a cohort of their siblings (4,127), participating in the Childhood Cancer Survivor Study.

The researchers found that risks for performance limitations (15.2 versus 12.5 percent; prevalence ratio [PR], 1.5), restrictions in [personal care](#) (2.0 versus 0.6 percent; PR, 3.1), routine activities (5.5 versus 1.6 percent; PR, 3.6), and work/[school attendance](#) (8.8 versus 2.1 percent; PR, 4.5) were increased in survivors compared with siblings.

Between the 1970s and 1990s, the prevalence of survivors reporting reduced function did not decrease. Regardless of treatment decade, the presence of neurological and cardiovascular conditions was associated with reduced function.

"Our findings support screening for reduced physical function so that [early interventions](#) to improve physical performance and mitigate chronic disease can be initiated," the authors write.

**More information:** Carmen L. Wilson et al, Trends in physical functioning in acute lymphoblastic leukemia and non-Hodgkin lymphoma survivors across three decades, *Journal of Cancer Survivorship* (2023). [DOI: 10.1007/s11764-023-01483-1](https://doi.org/10.1007/s11764-023-01483-1)

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