

Lesbian, gay, and bisexual survivors of adolescent and young adult cancers often have chronic health conditions: Study

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Lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) adolescents and young adult cancer survivors in the United States are more likely to report experiencing chronic health conditions than their heterosexual peers with a history of

cancer, as well as their LGB peers without a past cancer diagnosis. The findings come from a survey-based study published by Wiley online in [Cancer](#).

Previous studies have indicated that minority [sexual orientation](#) and gender identity populations have higher prevalence rates of many chronic conditions—including [heart disease](#), stroke, hypertension, diabetes, lung disease, and kidney disease—than heterosexual populations.

To assess the burden of [chronic health conditions](#) among survivors of adolescent and young adult cancer with minoritized sexual orientations, a team led by Michael E. Roth, MD, of The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, analyzed 2013–2020 data from the National Health Interview Survey, an ongoing household survey with interviews conducted throughout the United States either face-to-face or over the telephone.

The team's analysis included information on 170 LGB cancer survivors (diagnosed between the ages of 15 and 39 years) who were matched to 1,700 LGB individuals without a history of cancer and 1,700 heterosexual cancer survivors.

LGB cancer survivors were more likely than LGB individuals without a history of cancer and heterosexual cancer survivors to report at least one chronic health condition (71.0%, 51.0%, and 59.0% of individuals, respectively) and more than two chronic health conditions (21.0%, 7.7%, and 15.1%, respectively). These elevated risks were seen for conditions including cardiovascular disease, arthritis, and pulmonary disease.

After adjusting for sociodemographic variables, LGB cancer survivors had 2.45 times higher odds of having chronic health conditions than LGB individuals without a history of cancer and 2.16 times higher odds

than heterosexual survivors.

"This study highlights significant health disparities that affect the LGB cancer survivor community and points to the need for specialized care and attention for these individuals during and after their [cancer treatment](#) to address their heightened risk of chronic health issues," said Dr. Roth. "This could hopefully lead to more equitable health care for sexual and gender minority populations."

More information: Amy M. Berkman, Risk of Chronic Health Conditions in Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Survivors of Adolescent and Young Adult Cancers, *Cancer* (2023). [DOI: 10.1002/cncr.35015](https://doi.org/10.1002/cncr.35015)

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