Researchers identify factors associated with COVID-19 vaccination acceptance among cancer patients

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Cancer patients are at higher risk of poor outcomes from COVID-19 infection due to their disease and therapies that may weaken the immune system. The development of COVID-19 vaccines has greatly reduced mortality associated with COVID-19 infection; however, some people are hesitant to be vaccinated. While many studies have addressed vaccine hesitancy in the general population, few studies have analyzed why cancer patients may be reluctant to receive the vaccination series. In a new study published online ahead of print in the journal Vaccine, Moffitt Cancer Center researchers identify factors associated with acceptance of COVID-19 vaccinations among patients with cancer.

Survey results revealed that most cancer patients (86.8%) were high accepters of COVID-19 vaccines. Patients who were high accepters were more confident in the effectiveness and safety of the vaccine than low accepters. Additionally, higher accepters were more likely to be older individuals, believed COVID-19 infection posed a severe risk, practiced more risk mitigation behaviors, like wearing a mask in public, and had a history of receiving the flu shot. Alternatively, cancer patients who were less likely to accept COVID-19 vaccination were more likely to be living with more than one other person and were more socioeconomically disadvantaged.

The researchers hope that their findings will help identify specific cancer patient populations to educate about the benefits of COVID-19 vaccines.

"Our findings suggest that similar to the general population, targeted interventions to improve vaccine acceptance in cancer patients should focus on younger individuals, those living with others and those who are more socioeconomically disadvantaged," said study author Cassandra A. Hathaway, MPH, CPH, a member of the Department of Cancer Epidemiology at Moffitt.

"Specific multilevel interventions should focus on..."
issues related to concerns about vaccine effectiveness, safety/side effects and lack of trust in any COVID-19 vaccine."


Provided by H. Lee Moffitt Cancer Center & Research Institute

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