

## Childhood Cancer Survivors Have Low, but Increased Risk of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

A new report from the Childhood Cancer Survivor Study (CCSS) showed that childhood cancer survivors were almost five times more likely to have post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) than their siblings who did not have cancer as children. However, the risk of PTSD for childhood cancer survivors was low, with 9% experiencing PTSD as adults. PTSD was more common for people who were diagnosed with cancer between ages 15 and 20 and for those who had longer and more intensive chemotherapy or radiation therapy. PTSD was less common for people who had neuroblastoma, which is more common for young children who may not remember treatment. It was also less common for people who had Wilms' tumor, which is often treated with surgery.

Researchers also found that PTSD was more common for women from minority groups, unmarried people, people without a college education, and people who earn less than \$20,000 per year or are unemployed. However, the researchers were unsure how these factors and PTSD are connected.

### What this means for patients

?The good news is that more than 90% of survivors of childhood cancer don't have PTSD, even though they went through a very difficult experience,? said lead author Margaret Stuber, MD, Jane and Marc Nathanson Professor of Psychiatry at the University of California, Los Angeles David Geffen School of Medicine. ?However, some do have long-term functional difficulties that require attention. Screening for PTSD should be considered part of long-term health care for childhood cancer survivors.?

### What to Ask Your Doctor

- What are the risk factors for PTSD?
- What are the symptoms of PTSD?
- If I am concerned about my risk of PTSD, what screening do you recommend?

### For More Information

[Cancer.Net Guide to Childhood Cancer](#) [1]

[Childhood Cancer Survivorship](#) [2]

[Late Effects of Childhood Cancer](#) [3]

### Links:

[1] <http://www.cancer.net/patient/Cancer+Types/Childhood+Cancer>

[2] <http://www.cancer.net/patient/Survivorship/Childhood+Cancer+Survivorship>

[3] <http://www.cancer.net/patient/All+About+Cancer/Cancer.Net+Feature+Articles/After+Treatment+and+Survivorship/Late+Effects+of+Childhood+Cancer>