



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
MD Anderson
Cancer Center

Making Cancer History®

Survivorship: Integrating Life

Medical Considerations

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Cancer Survivorship

“An individual is considered a cancer survivor from the time of diagnosis through the rest of life.” – National Cancer Institute

- >2,000,000 survivors of young adult cancer are currently living in the United States

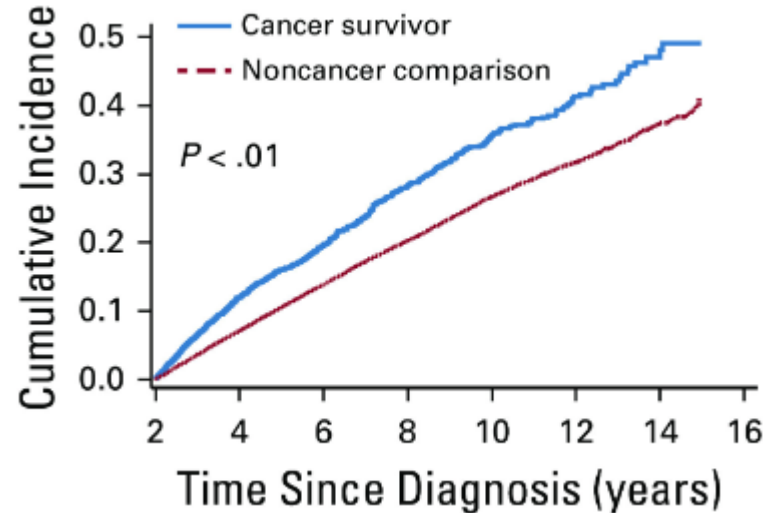
**Few studies have assessed long-term outcomes
for survivors of young-onset colorectal cancer**

Cancer Can Impact Everything!



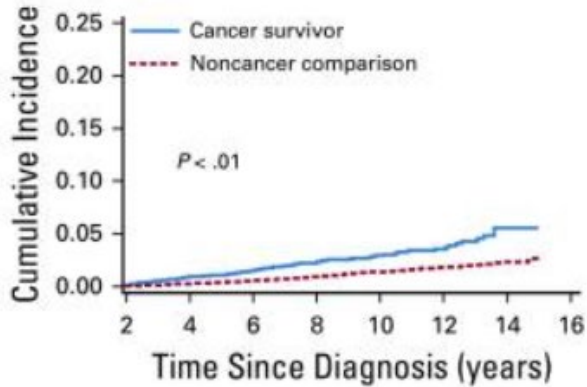
Chronic Health Conditions in Young Adult Cancer Survivors

- Survivors of young adult cancer have a higher risk for developing 1 or more chronic health conditions

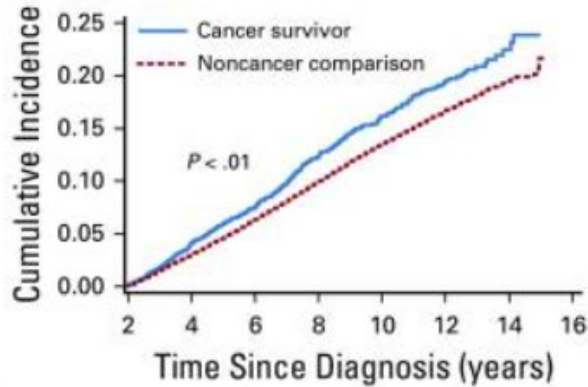


Cardiovascular Disease in Young Adult Cancer Survivors

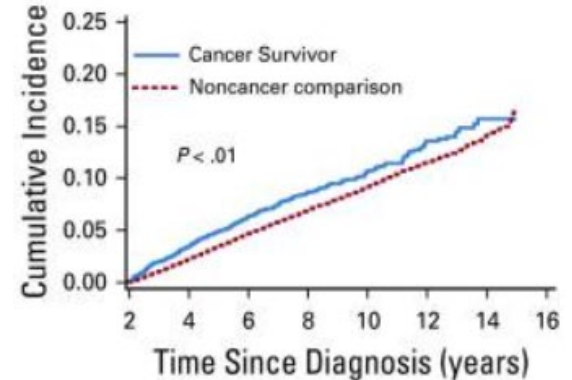
Cardiovascular Disease



Elevated Lipids



High Blood Pressure



Potential Long-Term Side Effects of Treatment

- Intestinal, anal, and rectal dysfunction
- Urinary dysfunction
- Sexual Health
- Bone Health
- Secondary Cancers

Survivorship Care Needs

- **Survivors of young-onset cancer need lifelong:**
 - Primary care management of general health
 - Optimal preventative healthcare
 - Risk-based screening for late side effects of treatment
 - Screening for subsequent cancers

Survivorship Care Recommendations



Exercise



Eat Well



Avoid Tobacco,
Limit Alcohol



Follow Up with
Healthcare



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Psychosocial Considerations

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Psychosocial Issues of YA Cancer Survivors

Cancer disrupts and can impede normal process of development

- Cognitive and emotional skills still developing up to age 25 (Steinberg, 2005)
- Social development: Being separated from peers and feeling “left behind” as peers continue in emerging adulthood phase of development can lead to feelings of loneliness and isolation
- Relationship development: dating, sexuality, body image, fertility concerns
- Education/Career development



Psychosocial Issues of YA Cancer Survivors

Psychological Distress (Crowder et al., 2023; Geue et al, 2021; Barnett et al., 2016; Bellizzi et al, 2012)

- **Depression-** disease/treatment long term effects, chronic symptom burden, changes to physical or cognitive abilities, impaired quality of life
- **Anxiety-** fear of reoccurrence, fear of unknown future, being different from peers, feeling different, cancer related disclosure, lack of control and helplessness
- **Survivor's guilt** versus difficulty accepting “neither sick nor healthy”
- **Trauma** responses, avoidance



Psychosocial Issues of YA Cancer Survivors

Psychological Distress Cont. (Crowder et al., 2023; Geue et al, 2021; Barnett et al., 2016; Bellizzi et al, 2012)

- **Self esteem-** feeling self-conscious, changes in relationships, changes in appearance, body image
- **Grief-** secondary losses including fertility, relationships, future goals, achievements, and milestones
- **Financial Stress-** medical debt, job loss, job instability

Unmet emotional and psychological needs for AYAs post treatment



Psychosocial Issues of YA Cancer Survivors

Positive Life Impact of Cancer (Bellizzi et al, 2012)

- Improved relationships with mothers, fathers, siblings, friends, and spouses
- Plans for future and goal setting, change in priorities, clearer vision for goals
- Health competence including confidence in ability to take care of your health



Psychosocial Issues of Cancer Survivorship

Interventions and Recommendations (Crowder et al., 2023; Barnett et al., 2016)

- Improved health behaviors such as nutrition and physical activity improved overall well being
- Distraction based coping- temporary, less effective
- Active Processing- psychotherapy(CBT, ACT), mindfulness, psychological growth, making meaning, grief work, integration of cancer into current life
- Seeking support- social media support groups, social support predictor of psychological growth (Love & Sabiston, 2011); less positive social support associated with higher depression and anxiety levels (Merz et al., 2024)
- Seeking medical information concerning possible late and long-term side effects
- Support in fertility/family planning
- Education, job/work/career support

Questions ?

Thank you for your attendance

