

Increased Life Expectancy Seen For Patients with Advanced Colorectal, Ovarian and Testicular Cancer

Atlanta 2008/04/08 -A new study indicates that patients receiving treatments for late stage testicular, colorectal and ovarian cancer have increased life expectancy, resulting from the proportion of patients cured or by prolonging survival among non-cured patients. The research reveals that mathematical models and population level data can be used to determine how treatment advances are changing survival and are impacting mortality. The study is published in the May 15, 2008 issue of *CANCER*, a peer-reviewed journal of the American Cancer Society.

Mining cancer data from the Surveillance, Epidemiology and End Results program, Lan Huang, Ph.D. and colleagues from the National Cancer Institute analyzed the survival trends of 27,243 patients diagnosed with late stage ovarian cancer, 29,033 patients with late stage colorectal cancer, and 1,822 patients with late stage testicular cancer during the interval from 1973-2000 with follow up through 2002.

The team's models revealed that treatment improvements for ovarian cancer resulted in a total gain of life expectancy of 2 years, 80 percent of which was due to an extension of survival time in uncured patients (from 0.9 to 2.1 years) rather than an increased proportion of cures. In contrast, treatment improvements for colorectal cancer resulted in a gain of life expectancy of 2.8 years, 82 percent of which was due to an improved cure rate. For testicular cancer, the cure rate rose from 23 percent to 81 percent, representing a 24 year gain in life expectancy.

The investigators concluded that their results suggest that treatment benefits for late stage testicular and colorectal cancer are primarily a result of increases in cure fraction, while survival gains for ovarian cancer occur in spite of persisting disease.

"Cure models in combination with population level data provide insight into how treatment advances are changing survival and ultimately impacting mortality," the authors wrote. "Survival patterns reflect the underlying biology of response to cancer treatment and suggest promising directions for future research," they added.

Article: "Improved survival time: What can survival cure models tell us about population-based survival improvements in late stage colorectal, ovarian, and testicular cancer?" Lan Huang, Kathleen A. Cronin, Karen A. Johnson, Angela B. Mariotto, and Eric J. Feuer. *CANCER*; Published Online: April 07, 2008 (DOI: 10.1002/cncr.23425); Print Issue Date: May 15, 2008.

David Sampson
Director, Medical & Scientific Communications
American Cancer Society
213 368-8523
david.sampson@cancer.org
