

# COVID-19 Risk in Cancer Survivors

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## Introduction

Coronaviruses are a huge viral family that affects humans and a variety of animals. SARS-CoV-2 is a novel (new) coronavirus that has triggered a respiratory pandemic known as COVID-19 (coronavirus disease 2019). SARS-CoV-2 has more opportunity to adapt as it spreads, resulting in novel varieties. Some variations may be more easily transmitted or resistant to immunizations and therapies. Many people, including cancer patients, their families, and carers, have been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, which was caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Vaccines (also known as immunizations or vaccinations) aid a person's immune system in recognising and protecting the body from specific illnesses. COVID-19 can be prevented with the use of vaccines. COVID-19 poses a greater risk of severe disease if you have cancer. Having a weakened immune system (being immunocompromised), being older, and having other medical disorders are all factors that enhance the risk of serious disease from COVID-19.

COVID-19 may put persons with blood malignancies at a higher risk of infection and death than people with solid tumours. This is due to the fact that individuals with blood malignancies frequently have aberrant or decreased amounts of immune cells that produce antiviral antibodies. It is critical that family members, loved ones, and caregivers of persons with cancer get vaccinated to help protect them from COVID-19. The COVID-19 vaccinations are extremely successful at avoiding serious sickness and death from all of the versions that have been discovered thus far.

Wearing a mask in public interior places and social distancing will also assist protect vulnerable persons and reduce the spread of the virus in areas where the illness is spreading swiftly. COVID-19 vaccinations may have a poorer response in patients with certain cancers and those getting immune-suppressing medication than in people whose immune systems are not affected. If cancer survivors have medical issues such as heart disease, hypertension, diabetes, or are on immunosuppressive therapy for another medical illness, they may be more susceptible to viral complications. Extended endocrine therapy for breast and ovarian cancer do not appear to raise a survivor's risk of COVID-19 [1-5].

Many doctors urge that persons with cancer get vaccinated against

COVID-19. However, while COVID-19 vaccines appear to be safe for most cancer patients, they may be ineffective, particularly if your immune system has been compromised by your disease or treatments. Because the earliest trials were conducted on patients with normal immune systems, no investigations have been conducted to prove this. Vaccines, on the other hand, are known to be less effective in persons with weakened immune systems. Keep in mind that the same thing that makes the vaccine less effective (a weakened immune response) puts you at risk for serious COVID-19 disease.

That's why, even though it's less effective, many experts recommend getting the vaccine. They think that some protection is preferable to none at all. Even when general recommendations ease, if you have a weaker immune system, you may need to take extra precautions including masking, social distance, and avoiding groups, even if you have the vaccine. Chemotherapy has an impact on every part of the body, including the immune system. These cancer-killing drugs also reduce the quantity of white blood cells in your body, which fight infection. When your white blood cell counts are at their lowest during your treatment cycle, you're most vulnerable to infection. During treatment, your blood counts will be monitored frequently. As a result, your treatment team will be able to tell you when you're most at risk. Nonetheless, do everything you can to help prevent infection at all times.

## References

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