

Transcript Details

This is a transcript of an educational program. Details about the program and additional media formats for the program are accessible by visiting: <https://reachmd.com/programs/heart-matters/long-term-cv-risk-cancer-treatment/67272/>

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A Long-Term View of Cardiovascular Risk After Cancer Treatment

Announcer:

This is *Heart Matters* on ReachMD. On this episode, Dr. Stephanie Dixon will discuss key considerations for cardiovascular risk prevention in survivors of childhood cancer. She's a pediatric oncologist and an Assistant Member in the Division of Cancer Survivorship in the Department of Oncology at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Here's Dr. Dixon now.

Dr. Dixon:

My area of focus is adult survivors of childhood cancer, and we know specifically in those populations, most of the late cardiovascular events that are occurring more than five years after childhood cancer are really occurring quite late. And so where we're falling short is that these survivors continue to die at a higher rate and younger age from cardiovascular conditions that are regularly seen in an older adult population. So this includes things like ischemic heart disease or heart attack, heart failure, stroke, and valvular heart disease, which are impacted by cancer treatment but also by many of the traditional risk factors that we all develop over time and that contribute to risk in the general population. And we know that to be also true of adult survivors of adult cancers in certain groups, like breast cancer survivors. So I think it's just really important to keep this population in mind, not just immediately after cancer, but really for years and decades as they are aging beyond their cancer diagnosis and continuing to have more problems than the general population.

Patients who survive cancer but were exposed to cardiotoxic therapies like anthracycline chemotherapies, chest-directed radiation, and now more novel or targeted therapeutic agents, especially in the adult space, who then go on to develop more traditional cardiovascular risk factors like high blood pressure, high cholesterol, or diabetes, or who are less active than we may recommend they be or have a poor quality diet—we know that those things are more than additive in increasing their risk for future cardiovascular events. So it's really critical that we think about both the cancer treatment exposures and the traditional risk factors at the same time because they compound the risk that our survivors are experiencing.

And I actually think it's a useful tool when educating survivors and providers who may not see these patients often to say, "Hey, this is a population where you have to be even more aware of traditional risk factors and treat them perhaps even more aggressively early on in life."

Announcer:

That was Dr. Stephanie Dixon talking about cardiovascular risk prevention in adult survivors of childhood cancer. To access this and other episodes in this series, visit *Heart Matters* on ReachMD.com, where you can be part of the knowledge. Thanks for listening!