

Child's cancer often causes parents severe distress: study

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Odds of recovery, pain and finances are major worries.

(HealthDay)—Many parents of children with advanced cancer have high to severe levels of psychological distress, a new study finds.

The study included 81 parents of children treated for advanced cancer at Boston Children's Hospital, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and Seattle Children's Hospital between December 2004 and June 2009.

Assessments revealed that more than half of the parents had high levels of [psychological distress](#) and 16 percent had severe levels.

Parents' levels of psychological distress were associated with their child's symptoms and suffering, financial problems, goals of cancer care and understanding of their child's prognosis.

Psychological distress was much lower among parents whose understanding of their child's prognosis matched the specific goals of [cancer care](#), according to the study, which was published online April 1 in the journal *JAMA Pediatrics*.

Efforts to make this match and to ease child suffering and financial problems could help reduce parents' psychological distress, concluded Dr. Abby Rosenberg, of Seattle Children's Hospital, and colleagues in a journal news release.

More information: The American Cancer Society offers advice for dealing with [cancer in children](#).

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