

11.2 percent of pediatric cancer patients positive for SARS-CoV-2

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(HealthDay)—Among pediatric cancer patients, overall morbidity of

COVID-19 is low, according to a research letter published online May 13 in *JAMA Pediatrics*.

Farid Boulad, M.D., from the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in New York City, and colleagues performed severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) testing among pediatric cancer patients presenting for outpatient or inpatient care who had been exposed to COVID-19 or who had symptoms of infection; [asymptomatic patients](#) prior to deep sedation, myelosuppressive chemotherapy, or hospital admission; and caregivers accompanying patients for admission or multiday chemotherapy. A total of 335 tests for SARS-CoV-2 were performed on [pediatric patients](#) and their caregivers between March 10 and April 12, 2020.

The researchers found that 11.2 percent of the 178 unique pediatric patients had positive [test](#) results. The rate of positivity for SARS-CoV-2 was 29.3 percent among patients specifically tested for positive screening or symptoms. In contrast, the rate of positivity was only 2.5 percent among 120 asymptomatic patients without known exposure. Only three of the 20 patients who tested positive for SARS-CoV-2 were female (15 percent compared with 43 percent of those who tested negative). One patient with COVID-19 required non-critical care hospitalization for COVID-19; three patients were admitted for concomitant fever and neutropenia, cancer morbidity, or planned chemotherapy. Overall, 13 of the 74 adult caregivers tested were positive for SARS-CoV-2.

"Our results do not support the conjecture that children are a reservoir of unrecognized SARS-CoV-2 infection," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text](#)

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