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FACT SHEET

Young People With Cancer

- Cancer is the leading cause of non-accidental death among adolescents and young adults in the United States.¹
- Adolescents are poorly represented in research studies to improve their outcomes. Researchers included 47-60% of patients 0-14 years of age with cancer into National Cancer Institute-sponsored clinical trials, but only 10% of those ages 15-19 are represented in such studies.
- Adolescents and young adults (ages 15-29) are diagnosed with cancer at twice the rate of children ages 0-14.²
- Adolescents' and young adults' prospects for a cure are also worse than those of younger children.³ Between 1973 and 1992, the mortality rate of adolescents and young adults declined by only 33%, which was less than the declines in mortality seen among younger children.
- Top 5 Cancers⁴ Diagnosed Among Young People (0-21 years of age) in the U.S. from 1975-2002:
 - 1) Leukemia (25%)
 - 2) Brain/CNS (16.7%)
 - 3) Lymphoma (15.5%)
 - 4) Carcinomas (9.2%)
 - 5) Soft Tissue (7.4%)
- With a few exceptions, adolescents and young adults with cancer have lower adherence to treatment regimens compared with younger patients⁵ and older adults.⁶

¹ Albritton, K. & W.A. Bleyer (2003). "The management of cancer in the older adolescent." European Journal of Cancer 39(18): 2584-99. ; Jemal, A., Thomas, A., et al. (2002). "Cancer Statistics, 2002." CA: A Cancer Journal of Clinicians 52: 23-27.

² Albritton and Bleyer, 2003.

³ Barr, R.D. (2001). "The adolescent with cancer." European Journal of Cancer 37(12): 1523-7, discussion 1527-30.; Bleyer, W.A., H. Tejada, et al. (1997). "National cancer clinical trials; children have equal access; adolescents do not." Journal of Adolescent Health 21(6): 366-73.

⁴ Ries, L.A., Percy, C.L., Bunin, G.R. (1999). Introduction. In L.A. Ries, M.A. Smith, J.G. Gurney, M. Linet, T. Tamra, J.L. Young, G.R. Bunin (Eds.). *Cancer Incidence and Survival Among Children and Adolescents: United States SEER Program 1975-1995* (SEER Pediatric Monograph, NIH Publication No 99-4649m pp. 1-15). Bethesda, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Retrieved September 15, 2005, from <http://seer.cancer.gov/publications/childhood/introduction.pdf>.

⁵ Jamison, R.N., S. Lewis, et al. (1986). "Cooperation with treatment in adolescent cancer patients." Journal of Adolescent Health Care 7(3): 162-167; Smith, S.D., D. Rosen, et al. (1979).

"A reliable method for evaluation drug compliance in children with cancer." Cancer 43(1): 169-

173.; Tebbi, C.K., K.M. Cummings, et al. (1986). "Compliance of pediatric and adolescent cancer patients." Cancer 58(5): 1179-84.

⁶ Merluzzi, T.V. and M.A. Martinez Sanchez (1997). "Assessment of self-efficacy and coping with cancer: development and validation of the cancer behavior inventory." Health Psychology 16(2) 163-70.

