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Dental anxiety among survivors of childhood cancer: a cross-sectional study.

<https://arctichealth.org/en/permalink/ahliterature90244>

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Source: Int J Paediatr Dent. 2009 Mar;19(2):121-6

Date: Mar-2009

Language: English

Publication Type: Article

Keywords: Adolescent
Case-Control Studies
Central Nervous System Neoplasms - complications - psychology
Child
Cross-Sectional Studies
Denmark - epidemiology
Dental Anxiety - complications - epidemiology - psychology
Female
Humans
Leukemia - complications - psychology
Lymphoma - complications - psychology
Male
Prevalence
Reference Values
Survivors - psychology

Abstract: BACKGROUND: Childhood cancer survivors may have experienced a high number of invasive medical and dental procedures which are known to be risk factors for dental anxiety. AIM: The aim of this study was to examine the prevalence of dental anxiety among children who have survived cancer. DESIGN: In a cross-sectional study, we examined 51 6- to 14-year-old children who had been treated for cancer at Aalborg Hospital, and 192 children without cancer. All children answered the Dental Subscale of the Children's Fear Survey Schedule. Dental anxiety was defined as a dental anxiety score exceeding the mean dental anxiety score + 1 standard deviation for the children without cancer. RESULTS: Children with cancer did not have an increased prevalence of dental anxiety compared with children without cancer: the prevalence ratio was 0.41 [95% confidence interval (CI): 0.10-1.24]. The mean dental anxiety score was 23.1 (95% CI: 21.2-25.0) among children who had been treated for cancer, and 24.7 (95% CI: 23.4-26.0) among children without cancer (mean difference: 1.6; 95% CI: 1.1-4.3). CONCLUSION: Cancer and cancer treatment during childhood were not associated with an increased risk of dental anxiety in this population.

PubMed ID: 19178605 [View in PubMed](#) 