Common Cancers Are More Fatal Among People With HIV

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HIV-positive Americans are more likely to die than those without the virus following a diagnosis with many common cancers, aidsmap reports. By analyzing pooled results from five large cancer registries in states where HIV is reported, researchers deduced the relative risk of dying of 14 common cancers. They presented their findings at the Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI) in Boston.

When compared with those without HIV, HIV-positive people proved to be at increased risk of dying of nine of the cancers. This elevated risk was the greatest for breast cancer: HIV-positive women were 2.71-times more likely to die of the malignancy than HIV-negative women. Lung cancer was 25 percent more likely to be fatal among those with HIV than in those without.

While people with HIV are at the greatest elevated risk of developing anal cancer, they are no more likely to die of it than people who are HIV negative.

The researchers stated at CROI that more research is needed in order to determine the reasons for these differences in mortality risk. Potential factors may include variable access to cancer treatment and the stage at which cancers are identified. During the question and answer period at the presentation, others suggested that people with HIV may respond differently to chemotherapy and that those who are not engaged in HIV care may be at greater risk of dying of cancer following a diagnosis of the disease.

To read the aidsmap story, click here.

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