Cancer Predisposition Variants and Subsequent-Malignancy-related latemortality among long-term survivors of childhood cancer.

Cheng Chen*, Na Qin*, Mingjuan Wang*, Saima Sultana Tithi, Yawei Hui, Wenan Chen, Gang Wu, Dennis Kennetz, Michael N. Edmonson, Michael C. Rusch, Andrew Thrasher, John Easton, Heather Mulder, Nan Song, Qian Dong, Kyla Shelton, Matthew J. Ehrhardt, Kim E. Nichols, Wendy Leisenring, Yutaka Yasui, Smita Bhatia, Gregory T. Armstrong, Kirsten K. Ness, Melissa M. Hudson, Deo Kumar Srivastava, Hui Wang#, Jinghui Zhang#, Leslie L. Robison#, Zhaoming Wang#

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BACKGROUND: We previously reported that among 3,006 survivors of childhood cancer in the St. Jude Lifetime Cohort (SJLIFE), 5.8% (95% CI = 5.0% to 6.7%) carried a cancer predisposition variant (CPV) in one of the 60 genes implicated in autosomal dominant cancer predisposition, and had increased risk of developing subsequent malignancies (SMNs). Among long-term survivors of childhood cancer, the rate of SMN-related late-mortality among carriers of CPV versus non-carriers is unknown.

METHODS: Whole-genome sequencing (WGS) or whole-exome sequencing (WES) data for 12,475 five-year survivors were used to classify CPV status as previously described (Wang et al., JCO, 2018), including 4,402 from SJLIFE and 8,073 from the Childhood Cancer Survivor Study (CCSS; the CCSS original cohort data was downloaded from dbGaP, phs001327.v2). Mortality data were obtained through a search of the National Death Index. SMN-related mortality was analyzed using cmprsk R package implementing Fine & Gray method where other-cause mortality was treated as the competing risk. Deaths with unknown causes were excluded.

RESULTS: A total of 263 SMN-related and 396 other-cause deaths occurred among the survivors. 642 (5.1%, 95% CI = 4.8% to 5.5%) survivors were CPV carriers. Overall, cumulative SMN-related mortality was significantly increased in CPV carriers versus non-carriers (P = 2.9x10⁻⁷) whereas cumulative other-cause mortality was not (P = 0.38). By 40 years from achieving 5-year survival, the cumulative SMN-related mortality was 12.8% (95% CI = 10.0% to 15.6%) among CPV carriers as compared to 6.2% (95% CI = 5.7% to 6.7%) among non-carriers, and the cumulative other-cause mortalities were comparable (9.3% vs. 9.5%). After adjusting for genetically-determined race, sex, age at diagnosis and cancer treatment exposures, carrying a CPV was associated with increased rate of SMN-related mortality (Relative Rate [RR] = 3.34, 95% CI = 2.13 to 5.24, P = 1.5x10⁻⁷ for the combined cohorts; RR = 5.24, 95% CI = 2.15 to 12.79, P = 2.7x10⁻⁴ in SJLIFE; and RR = 3.02, 95% CI = 1.79 to 5.10, P = 3.7x10⁻⁵ in CCSS). Notably, the association between CPV status and SMN-related mortality was substantially higher (RR = 4.82, 95% CI = 3.09 to 7.52) among those received higher doses of chest irradiation (≥ 20 Gy) than lower doses or none (<20 Gy) (RR = 1.45, 95% CI = 0.42 to 4.97), suggesting gene-treatment interactions.

CONCLUSION: Carrying a CPV will not only increase the risk of developing SMN but also the risk of SMN-related mortality among long-term survivors of childhood cancer, highlighting the importance of genetic testing for CPVs to guide precision preventive survivorship care.