Cancer Among Montana Children

The Burden of Pediatric Cancer in Montana

About 47 Montana children aged 0 to 19 years are diagnosed with cancer each year. MT children get cancer at the same rate as all children in the U.S.

The most common types of cancer in children in MT and the U.S. are:

1. Leukemia
2. Lymphoma
3. Brain and Central Nervous System (CNS) Cancer
4. Melanoma and Epithelial Cancer

Figure 1: Age-adjusted Cancer Incidence (new cases) among Children in Montana and the United States, 2009 to 2018

Children aged 4 or younger and adolescents aged 15 to 19 had higher incidence of cancer in Montana and the United States than children aged 5 to 14 (Figure 2). Leukemia and CNS cancers are most common among younger children in Montana. Epithelial cancers and lymphoma are most common among adolescents (Table 1).

Montana girls and boys were diagnosed with cancer at the same rate (Figure 3). There was also no significant difference in the rate of cancer among American Indian (AI) children and white children.

Table 1: Number of New Cases of Selected Cancers Within Each Age Group, Montana, 2009 to 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>0 to 4</th>
<th>5 to 9</th>
<th>10 to 14</th>
<th>15 to 19</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leukemia</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lymphoma</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CNS Cancers</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Epithelial cancers</td>
<td>&lt; 5</td>
<td>&lt; 5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The cancer with the most cases within each age group is shaded dark gray and the next most common is shaded lighter gray.
There was no significant difference in the rate of pediatric cancers within any region of Montana compared to the state as a whole (Figure 4).

**Addressing Pediatric Cancers in Montana**

Because Montana is a rural state and there are few cases of pediatric cancer it is difficult for children with cancer to get treatment without having to travel. In fact, most Montana children with cancer (52%) travel out of state for all of their cancer treatment. This puts additional burden on children and families already dealing with an incredibly difficult situation.

The Montana Cancer Coalition Pediatric Cancer Team is working to improve access to care for Montana children who have cancer. Their goal is to ensure children with cancer are provided patient-centered treatment and survivorship services that improve quality of life. They aim to do that by increasing Montana's capacity to provide a continuum of care for youth with cancer from diagnosis through long-term survivorship, and by increasing education on the physical, emotional, and cognitive impact of childhood cancer to schools, families, and medical providers.

Find resources and learn more at [www.mtcancercoalition.org/pediatric-cancer](http://www.mtcancercoalition.org/pediatric-cancer)