

Lower income children with blood cancers are less likely to survive after blood and marrow transplantation

More support and resources are needed for children and families

Children who have blood cancers are less likely to survive after transplant if their families are low-income compared to children from higher-income families, a new study found.

The study found lower survival rates after the children got blood and marrow transplants (BMT), which can cure blood cancers.

Researchers looked at 3,700 children who got BMT for either:

- blood cancers, such as leukemia, lymphoma and myelodysplastic syndrome;
- or other diseases, such as sickle cell disease, inherited immune problems, and more.

Researchers found that children with cancer were less likely to survive if they either:

- had Medicaid (public health insurance for low-income children) instead of private health insurance;
- or were Black, compared to White children.

Survival was not different for low-income or Black children with diseases like sickle cell disease or immune problems.

Keep in mind

Researchers don't know exactly why children of lower income or Black race had a lower chance of survival. They are now studying possible reasons for these disparities, including the stress of poverty and racism on children's bodies, or financial hardship and trouble getting the care children need. Researchers want to see if children's health and survival can be improved by helping families to meet basic needs: food, heat, housing and transportation.

Ask your doctor

Consider asking your doctor to refer you to a social worker to connect your family to resources. Some programs can offset the costs of your child's care. Others help pay for families to travel if the transplant center is far from home.



Learn more about

- Help paying for BMT at [BeTheMatch.org](https://www.bethematch.org)
- Help for children with cancer at the National Children's Cancer Society, [theNCCSS.org](https://www.theNCCSS.org)
- Patient services of the American Cancer Society, [cancer.org](https://www.cancer.org)
- More [study summaries](#) at [CIBMTR.org](https://www.cibmtr.org)

About this research summary

This information is provided on behalf of the Consumer Advocacy Committee of the CIBMTR[®] (Center for International Blood and Marrow Transplant Research[®]).

Source

Bona K, Brazauskas R, He N, et al. [Neighborhood-Poverty and Pediatric Allogeneic Hematopoietic Cell Transplantation Outcomes: A CIBMTR Analysis](#). *Blood*. 2021 Jan 28;137(4):556-568. Epub ahead of print. Epub 2020 Oct 26. doi: 10.1182/blood.2020006252. PMC7845011.

