

# Pain, Depression Plague Older Cancer Survivors

BY MELINDA TANZOLA  
Contributing Writer

ATLANTA — Anxiety, depression, and pain are often overlooked in older cancer survivors, according to results of a study presented at the annual meeting of the American Society of Clinical Oncology.

In this study of 153 men who had been diagnosed with cancer an average of 3 years prior, pain, anxiety, and depression were common, occurring in 64%, 26%,

and 21% of men, respectively, according to prospective analysis of responses to a questionnaire.

Despite the high frequency of these issues, in many cases, oncologists did not discuss pain and well-being with their patients. According to blinded retrospective chart reviews, oncologists did not inquire about pain in 22% of the men.

Inquiries about mental health were more infrequent: 95% of men were not asked about anxiety, and 88% of men

were not asked about depression.

This failure to inquire about pain and mental health resulted in a significant proportion of men with each condition going overlooked, including 18% of men with pain, 85% of men with anxiety, and 75% of men with depression.

In an interview during his poster presentation, Dr. Harvey Jay Cohen said this information is very relevant for primary care physicians. "People need to be aware that cancer survivors, older ones at least,

not infrequently are anxious and showing signs of depression, said Dr. Cohen, professor and interim chair in the department of medicine and director of the Center for the Study of Aging and Human Development at Duke University Medical Center in Durham, N.C. "That's something people at least need to inquire about."

In the study, Dr. Cohen and his colleagues evaluated 153 male patients who visited a single oncology clinic at a Veterans Affairs Medical Center. ■

***"This continues to be one of the most outstanding textbooks of medicine ever written, and this edition could well be the best yet...I'm not sure if a single book could ever be described as so comprehensive as to be the only medicine text a physician might need, but this work indeed comes close."***

***—Doody's Book Review Service, Donald R. Frey, MD, Creighton University Medical Center, reviewer.***

The new, **22nd Edition™** combines the stunning new text with a dynamic, up-to-the-minute website.

- Updated weekly at [www.cecilmedicine.com](http://www.cecilmedicine.com)
- New full-color layout
- An evidence-based focus throughout

**Order your copy today!**

Simply call **1-800-545-2522** or visit [www.elsevierhealth.com](http://www.elsevierhealth.com)!

Edited by **Lee Goldman, MD** and **Dennis Ausiello, MD**.

Single volume **Edition** 2004. Over 2,670 pp. Over 1,150 ill. \$179.00

Order #0-7216-3991-1. 2-volume **Edition**. \$229.00. Order #0-7216-4563-1.

*\* No part of the e-dition package may be returned for refund or credit if box is opened or damaged.*

