

THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON CANCER TREATMENT

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on cancer care at multiple levels. Limited mobility from the unprecedented public health challenge posed by the pandemic and the nationwide lockdown policies to contain the spread of the disease has resulted in interruptions in all pillars of the cancer treatment paradigm:

A **39 percent decrease** was seen in **surgeries for colon cancer** in April 2020—the peak of the pandemic—compared to prepandemic levels.



67 percent of patients experienced a **delay in receiving chemotherapy** during the height of the pandemic compared to prepandemic levels.



66 percent of radiation oncologists surveyed **reported interruptions in radiotherapy** for existing cancer patients due to the pandemic.



A **60 percent decrease** was observed in the **number of new oncology clinical trials** launched during the five months at the height of the pandemic (January 2020 to May 2020) compared to a prepandemic period (October 2018 to May 2019).



More than 26 percent of lung cancer patients who were being actively treated before the pandemic with chemotherapy, molecularly targeted therapy, or immunotherapy **experienced a change in either treatment dosing**, i.e., how much anticancer therapeutic was administered, **or schedule**, i.e., how frequently the treatment was given.

