

# 1 **AYA Testis Cancer: the Unmet Challenge**

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33 **Abbreviations:** AYA – adolescent and young adult; SMN – second malignant neo-  
34 plasms; CVD – cardiovascular disease; GCT- germ cell tumours; OS – overall sur-  
35 vival; SES- socio-economic status; CCS – cancer specific survival; YST – yolk sac  
36 tumour; MMGCT -mixed malignant GCT; NSGCT-non-seminomatous GCT; mRNA –  
37 messenger RNA; RPLND - retroperitoneal lymph node dissection; TCS -testicular  
38 cancer survivors; MRD- minimal residual disease; miRNA –microRNAs; BEP - cispla-  
39 tin, etoposide and bleomycin; MaGIC- the Malignant Germ Cell International Consor-  
40 tium.

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**Abstract**

Testis cancer is considered a rare-incidence cancer but comprises the third most common cancer diagnosed within the AYA years (15-39y). Most testis cancer patients can anticipate a survival outcome in excess of 95%. However, there are subgroups of AYA patients where outcomes are considerably worse including younger adolescents, patients with certain histological subtypes, or from certain ethnic backgrounds. For those cured with chemotherapy, the toxicity of treatment and burden of late-effects is significant. Newer germ cell tumour - specific biomarkers may identify

67 patients that do not require further treatment interventions or may detect early recur-  
68 rence, potentially reducing the burden of treatment required for cure. International  
69 collaboration for this rare tumour is creating the forum for trial design, where these  
70 biomarker research questions are embedded. Going forward, AYA testis cancer pa-  
71 tients could benefit from having a more personalised treatment plan, tailored to risk,  
72 that minimises the overall burden of late-effects.

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## 82 **Introduction**

83 AYA cancer patients are a unique population; presenting with age-specific cancer  
84 diagnoses, differing tolerances to conventional therapies and often differing survival  
85 outcomes.<sup>(1)</sup>

86 As cancer constitutes the most common cause of disease-related deaths in this age-  
87 group, health-care provision has become focused on working towards an under-  
88 standing of how to provide better age-related outcomes of survival and experience of

89 care during and after treatment. <sup>(2)</sup>

90

91 Whilst there has been much progress, particularly with regard to how to create an  
92 environment to accommodate the specific psychosocial needs for AYA patients,  
93 there is still much to learn about how to provide optimal survival outcomes.

94

95 Testicular cancer is an excellent example of this challenge. It is the most common  
96 cancer diagnosed in men under age 40 years (y). <sup>(3)</sup> Germ cell tumours (GCT) are  
97 considered to be a curable cancer, with overall survival (OS) for all patients ap-  
98 proaching 96%. <sup>(4)</sup> However, adolescents diagnosed with a GCT are at risk of inferior  
99 outcomes when compared with either affected children or older adults. <sup>(5)</sup> More re-  
100 cent reports suggest that the broader range of AYA patients (between age 15-39y)  
101 do better than older men diagnosed with certain histological subtypes of testis can-  
102 cer. <sup>(6)</sup> So how can we ensure we identify <sup>(6)</sup> and provide effective therapies to accom-  
103 modate these subgroups of patients who are most at risk?

104

105 The peak incidence of GCT occurs at 30y, with the natural incidence of testis cancer  
106 spread across the entire AYA range. <sup>(4)</sup> There is both geographical and ethnic varia-  
107 tion in incidence within AYA, with white men in developed nations being dispropor-  
108 tionately affected. <sup>(7, 8)</sup> However, this largest group of patients also tends to have the  
109 best outcomes. Analysis of the impact of ethnicity and socioeconomic status (SES)  
110 has shown that African American and Hispanic populations have poorer cancer spe-  
111 cific survival (CSS), even when corrected for SES. <sup>(8, 9)</sup> Thus, within AYA testis can-

112 cer, we can identify another ‘at risk’ subgroup. What we understand less well is why  
113 these young men are more vulnerable to adverse outcomes. Here, we will discuss  
114 whether such outcomes can be accounted for by explanations other than poor ac-  
115 cess to health care for those not insured.<sup>(10)</sup> specifically whether diagnostic delays or  
116 presence of more advanced disease at presentation; different histologic predomi-  
117 nance or biologic behaviors can explain a survival gap.

118

119 The distribution and predominance of histologic subtypes of GCT varies with age. In  
120 children <11y the most common malignant histology is yolk sac tumor (YST).

121 YST in children are generally exquisitely chemo-sensitive, and offer excellent out-  
122 comes after treatment, even in the face of advanced metastatic disease.<sup>(11)</sup> Howe-

123 er, within the AYA years, mixed malignant GCT (MMGCT) becomes the most com-  
124 mon histology.<sup>(4)</sup> As age increases across the AYA range, there is relative increase

125 in percentage of seminoma diagnoses represented, until ultimately seminoma over-  
126 takes MMGCT as the most common histological diagnosis (Figure 1). The 5 year

127 CSS for either localized or metastatic MMGCT is less than for YST or seminoma in  
128 the same age-range.<sup>(4)</sup>

129 Pure choriocarcinoma, an aggressive non-seminomatous GCT (NSGCT) subtype  
130 which may present with a high burden of disease, remains rare. Hence, histologic  
131 subtype may in part contribute to the adolescent survival gap, but does not com-  
132 pletely account for all of the discrepancy observed.<sup>(12)</sup>

133

134 **Do AYA patients present later and have a higher burden of disease?**

135 Localized disease is by far the most common presentation of testis cancer; approxi-  
136 mately four-fold more common than a presentation with either regional or distant  
137 metastatic disease. <sup>(4)</sup> (Figure 2) OS from localized disease is 95%. However, in pa-  
138 tients aged between 10-15y, <50% patients present with localized disease. Of the  
139 remaining patients in this younger age-group, up to a third of patients are diagnosed  
140 with metastatic disease; a much higher rate than in any other age group. <sup>(4)</sup> Vener-  
141 oni et al found that adolescents had a longer symptom interval (SI) to diagnosis than  
142 children <sup>(13)</sup>. For adolescents with either locally or regionally advanced GCT, delays  
143 can worsen prognosis. <sup>(14)</sup> However the relationship between SI and overall survival  
144 is complex, multifactorial and must also take into account the tumour's biological be-  
145 havior. <sup>(15)</sup>

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148 **Can we identify the relationship between histologic subtypes within AYA and**  
149 **the burden of disease at presentation?**

150 Seminoma presents with localized disease in up to 80% of patients, across all ages.  
151 <sup>(4)</sup> In contrast, <50% of AYA diagnosed with a NSGCT have localized disease. <sup>(4)</sup> The  
152 MMGCT subtype, the most common form of NSGCT in adolescents, presents with  
153 metastatic disease three-fold more commonly than patients with seminoma. <sup>(4)</sup>  
154 Among AYAs, choriocarcinoma was the histologic type with the most advanced  
155 stage at diagnosis with up to 60% having regional or metastatic disease, but as it is  
156 rare, it has a minimal impact on overall survival outcomes. <sup>(4)</sup>

157 Hence, as both histology and younger AYA age at diagnosis correlate with a greater  
158 burden of disease, there is a consequent higher burden of therapy required for cure.

159

160 **How does initial burden of disease, histology and patient age relate to out-**  
161 **come for AYA?**

162 Overall an AYA patient with either localized disease or loco-regional disease can ex-  
163 pect OS in excess of 95%.<sup>(4)</sup> However, an AYA patient with distant metastatic dis-  
164 ease can anticipate a considerably lower chance of survival, between 70-80%.<sup>(4)</sup> For  
165 those who succumb to disease, within the AYA range, the age at which death is  
166 most likely to occur is between 20-24y. This anomaly has not changed for over 20  
167 years.<sup>(4)</sup>

168 Amini *et al* found that patients < 20y in the U.S., were managed more aggressively  
169 with surgery compared with the wider adult population, and received higher admin-  
170 istration rates of adjuvant chemotherapy.<sup>(16)</sup> Conceivably, the higher surgical inter-  
171 vention rate and more aggressive surgery performed, is explained by the higher in-  
172 cidence of NSGCT relative to seminoma in this age-group and a higher burden of  
173 disease at presentation . However, AYA patients generally had less co-morbidity  
174 recorded during treatment and more often received care in high volume centers, both  
175 factors normally associated with better outcomes.<sup>(6, 17)</sup> In contrast, AYA patients di-  
176 agnosed with seminoma have earlier stage disease at presentation, are treated with  
177 surveillance more frequently and have a slight OS advantage over older men.<sup>(6)</sup>

178 Additional factors to consider which may affect patient outcomes include the less  
179 well understood role of pharmacodynamics and pharmacokinetics. Eating disorders,



180 e.g. anorexia, bulimia, and obesity, all seen in the AYA age group, may have a prom-  
181 inent effect on drug distribution, sensitivity, efficacy, toxicity, and dosing. <sup>(18)</sup> Hence,  
182 more intervention may translate into better outcomes, but can translate into a greater  
183 burden of potential late-effects for an individual.

184

185

186 **Can our understanding of biologic behavior of GCT across different ages**  
187 **guide our interventional strategies to accommodate for survival discrepan-**  
188 **cies?**

189 GCT in pre-pubertal children generally show fundamental molecular differences to  
190 those in adult patients, despite sharing a similar histology, which suggests that bas-  
191 ing clinical management purely on chronological age or histology alone may not pro-  
192 vide optimal treatment strategies for AYA patients. <sup>(19)</sup>

193 Regarding genomic changes, gain of the short arm of chromosome 12 (12p) is an  
194 almost universal finding in adult testicular GCT patients. <sup>(20, 21)</sup> Gain of 12p was iden-  
195 tified in 5/18 (27%) male pediatric GCTs in one study <sup>(22)</sup> and 44% in another. <sup>(23)</sup> The  
196 incidence of 12p gain increased with patient age (29% <5y; 53% 5-16y) <sup>(23)</sup>. Thus,  
197 genomic copy number imbalances distinguish GCT subgroups primarily by age, ra-  
198 ther than by tumor site or histology <sup>(19)</sup>. However, for the AYA population, the prog-  
199 nostic significance of 12p gain and other genomic imbalances seen in GCTs is yet to  
200 be determined.

201

202 At a transcriptomic level, pediatric GCT have a distinct protein-coding (messenger  
203 RNA- mRNA) gene expression program compared with adult GCTs, irrespective of  
204 tumor site <sup>(24)</sup>. Furthermore, pediatric and adult tumors with comparable histology  
205 (seminoma, YST) were also segregated by global mRNA expression profiles, lending  
206 weight to the suggestion that the clinical management of these entities should be dif-  
207 ferent <sup>(24)</sup>. Interestingly, a very small number of pediatric GCTs had ‘adult’ profiles  
208 and *vice versa* <sup>(24)</sup>; the significance of such findings needs to be elucidated in further  
209 studies, and interrogation of biospecimens from an AYA cohort will likely facilitate  
210 this. An mRNA signature predictive of outcome has been reported in metastatic  
211 NSGCT patients (median age 29y; range 15-60y), which added independent prog-  
212 nostic accuracy to existing risk classification systems <sup>(25)</sup>. However, translation of this  
213 multi-gene signature into clinical practice will be challenging and, it remains unclear  
214 whether this predictive model would be applicable for pediatric or younger AYA (13-  
215 24y) populations. <sup>(19, 26)</sup>

216

217 **Do AYA have suboptimal treatment strategies/cure vs. Quality of life for AYA –**  
218 **have we got the balance right?**

219 Adult testis cancer is viewed as the success story for a curable cancer. However,  
220 this cure is not without significant cost in the longer term. The burden of late effects  
221 is both wide in range and significant in impact for all men requiring adjuvant treat-  
222 ment. They include an increased risk of second malignant neoplasm (SMN); early  
223 onset cardiovascular disease (CVD); hypogonadism; infertility; peripheral neurotoxi-

224 city; tinnitus and hearing loss; renal toxicity; pulmonary toxicity; fatigue; and anxiety  
225 and depression.

226

227 After mortality, fertility is the second most common concern for patients with cancer.

228 <sup>(27)</sup> This is of particular concern for younger AYA patients diagnosed and treated for  
229 cancer at a time in life when many have not made choices around starting a family,  
230 let alone completion. The link between reduced fertility and cancer starts at diagno-  
231 sis and up to to 50% of post-orchietomy patients have been shown to have de-  
232 creased sperm counts, with some patients also having low sperm motility and ab-  
233 normal sperm cells. <sup>(28)</sup>

234

235 Further components of testicular cancer therapy, namely retroperitoneal lymph node  
236 dissection (RPLND), radiotherapy and chemotherapy, all come with differing fertility  
237 risks. For patients requiring chemotherapy for cure, the cumulative dose of cisplatin-  
238 based treatment is directly associated with the risk of infertility and achievement of  
239 paternity. <sup>(29, 30, 31,)</sup> Conversely, the use of carboplatin-based regimens, directly com-  
240 pared with cisplatin, has been shown to be associated with fourfold greater recovery  
241 to normal sperm counts. <sup>(32)</sup> The majority of AYA patients will be diagnosed with a  
242 NSGCT and will receive 'adult' BEP.

243 Up to a third of patients with NSGCT metastatic disease may require consideration  
244 of a RPLND following chemotherapy. RPLND is associated with significant potential  
245 morbidity, both in the peri-operative period and in the long-term. In the post-  
246 chemotherapy setting, the gold standard for surgery remains a bilateral template dis-

247 section via an open approach. <sup>(33)</sup> If the retroperitoneal postganglionic sympathetic  
248 nerves are damaged intra-operatively, this surgical procedure carries the risk of in-  
249 ducing retrograde ejaculation in up to 9% of patients. <sup>(34)</sup>

250 Radiotherapy (RT) has played an important adjuvant role in advanced stage semi-  
251 noma therapy for many years, and for most patients, there is recovery of normal  
252 spermatogenesis within 24 months of end of treatment <sup>(30,35)</sup> . In long-term follow-up,  
253 when compared with a surgery-only cohort, there appears to be no significant impact  
254 on spermatogenesis. <sup>(30, 35)</sup> Thus overall, RT is less likely to be implicated in any loss  
255 of fertility for AYA patients, as fewer AYA patients will require RT.

256

257 Hypogonadism contributes to the risk of infertility. Causes of hypogonadism include  
258 orchiectomy itself, chemotherapy, radiotherapy and any underlying testicular dys-  
259 genesis syndrome. The additional side effects of hypogonadism include reduced  
260 sexual functioning, depression, fatigue, loss of muscle mass and osteoporosis. Fur-  
261 thermore, the known association between the metabolic syndrome and CVD as a  
262 direct result of hypogonadism adds substantially to the burden of late-effects. <sup>(36)</sup>

263

264 The risk of early onset CVD is of particular concern. The relative risk of CVD in pa-  
265 tients treated with chemotherapy is 1.4-7.1 fold higher compared with the general  
266 population or those patients undergoing surgery alone. <sup>(36, 37, 38)</sup> Hypogonadism, to-  
267 gether with chemotherapy-induced vascular injury and chemotherapy-related dis-  
268 turbance of metabolic homeostasis, combine <sup>(39)</sup> to increase CVD mortality risk. In a

269 population based study, Fung *et al* described patients appearing to be at most risk  
270 within the first year off treatment, with a calculated 5.3-fold risk of mortality. <sup>(40)</sup>  
271  
272 SMN constitutes a significant cause of morbidity and mortality. Post-chemotherapy,  
273 there is an increased risk of both solid and leukemic SMNs. Kollmansberger *et al* re-  
274 ported that the 5 year cumulative incidence of secondary leukemia after a cumulative  
275 etoposide dose of <2000mg/m<sup>2</sup> and >2000mg/m<sup>2</sup> was approximately 0.5% and  
276 2.0%, respectively. <sup>(41)</sup> Similarly, when Fung *et al* reviewed the risk of solid tumor  
277 SMN, a 1.4-fold increase risk for those who had received chemotherapy compared  
278 with those who underwent surgery alone was identified. <sup>(42)</sup> Therefore, not only the  
279 choice of chemotherapy drugs, but also the dosing of these drugs, appears to be im-  
280 portant.  
281 Long-term renal dysfunction has been directly associated with cumulative dosing of  
282 cisplatin. <sup>(43)</sup> Up to 40% of testicular cancer survivors (TCS) experience symptoms of  
283 peripheral neuropathy during and/or after chemotherapy. <sup>(44, 45)</sup> Non-fatal pulmonary  
284 toxicity has been reported between 7-21% of TCS. <sup>(46, 47)</sup> Risk factors for restrictive  
285 lung disease included cisplatin dose and increasing age, after adjusting for bleomy-  
286 cin, etoposide and vinblastine exposure. <sup>(48)</sup> For TCS treated with chemotherapy,  
287 there was a higher mortality rate from all respiratory diseases when compared with  
288 the general population. <sup>(49)</sup>  
289 Ototoxicity secondary to cisplatin may also have a significant impact on quality-of-  
290 life. <sup>(50, 51)</sup> Bokemeyer *et al* reported symptomatic ototoxicity in 20% of testicular  
291 cancer survivors. <sup>(52)</sup> Tinnitus was the most reported symptom in 59% patients, but

292 23% reported both tinnitus and hearing loss together. Dose was important, with 50%  
293 of patients receiving >400mg/m<sup>2</sup> cisplatin experiencing persistent ototoxicity. <sup>(52)</sup>  
294  
295 One of the late effects TCS find most distressing is fatigue; it is often the most fre-  
296 quently reported concern in long-term follow-up. <sup>(53)</sup> The prevalence of depression in  
297 up to 20% of TCS has been reported widely <sup>(54, 55, 56, and 57)</sup> with anxiety significantly  
298 associated with younger age at diagnosis. <sup>(55)</sup> AYA patients are already known to be  
299 more likely to suffer psychological problems after a cancer diagnosis and greater dif-  
300 ficulty in retaining employment or maintaining education. <sup>(58, 58, 60)</sup>  
301 Many AYAs with cancer report that their cancer makes them feel 'abnormal'. <sup>(61)</sup> TCS  
302 describe difficulty both with romantic partnerships and support. <sup>(62)</sup> Anxieties around  
303 body image and masculinity arise when changes in appearance (e.g. scarring, loss  
304 of hair/body parts etc.) result in diminishment of sexual attractiveness. <sup>(61, 62)</sup> Bellizzi  
305 *et al*, in the AYA HOPE study, showed that over 50% of TCS reported they felt like  
306 'damaged goods' due to surgical scars and loss of a testicle and had concerns about  
307 their ability to have children. <sup>(60, 61, 62)</sup>  
308 Although a cancer diagnosis may be disruptive to normal social maturation for an  
309 AYA patient <sup>(63, 64)</sup>, TCS considered that those who had not experienced testicular  
310 cancer could not understand how the experience had shaped their life views on ma-  
311 turing and growing up. They considered the experience provided them with a unique,  
312 but different, outlook on life, marriage and parenthood compared with their peers. <sup>(61)</sup>  
313 Hence for a common cancer in this AYA age range, for patients with many life years  
314 ahead, the burden of late-effects can be profound.

315

316 **What can we do to reduce burden of therapy? Personalizing the treatment**  
317 **plan.**

318 A better understanding of the absolute need for surgery, radiotherapy and intensity  
319 of chemotherapy regimens could mitigate against some late-effects. Minimal residual  
320 disease (MRD) testing by highly sensitive PCR techniques has been transformative  
321 for patients with ALL; allowing a more elegant risk stratification to inform the burden  
322 of therapy. <sup>(65)</sup>

323 The emergence of microRNAs (miRNA) as a biomarker of disease could potentially  
324 help risk-stratify the burden of therapy required for cure in a way analogous to MRD  
325 for ALL patients i.e. allowing understanding of 'molecular remission' and no re-  
326 quirement for any further treatment intervention. MiRNAs are short, non-coding  
327 RNAs that modulate protein-coding gene expression, through interactions with spe-  
328 cific binding sites in the 3' untranslated regions of messenger RNAs. <sup>(66)</sup> MiRNAs are  
329 dysregulated in cancer, acting either as oncogenes or tumor suppressor genes. <sup>(67)</sup>

330 In GCTs, the most striking finding was universal miR-371~373 and miR-302/367  
331 cluster over-expression in all malignant tumors, regardless of patient age (pediat-  
332 ric/AYA/adult), histologic subtype (YST/ seminoma) or anatomic site (gonad-  
333 al/extragonadal). <sup>(66)</sup> Expression levels of just the eight main miRNAs from these two  
334 clusters accurately separated >100 malignant GCTs from non-malignant samples,  
335 suggesting that these miRNAs could offer high sensitivity and specificity as malig-  
336 nant GCT biomarkers <sup>(66)</sup>.

337 Serum miRNAs have also been shown to be useful longitudinally for early sensitive  
338 detection of malignant recurrence in stage I disease and disease-monitoring follow-  
339 ing initiation of chemotherapy. <sup>(68)</sup> Serum miRNA testing and validation in prospective  
340 clinical trials (e.g. the Children's Oncology Group's trial AGCT1531) is now under  
341 way, heralding an opportunity for non-invasive monitoring and reduced use of serial  
342 CT scans with consequent radiation exposure during treatment and follow-up. <sup>(69)</sup>  
343 The potential methods of decreasing the morbidity of surgery in the future are likely  
344 to involve a decrease in the extent of surgical dissection, and the increased utiliza-  
345 tion of minimally invasive approaches, particularly robot-assisted RPLND. These  
346 methods are of particular significance in the AYA population. European and North  
347 American studies in high volume centers have shown that the use of modified unilat-  
348 eral templates for selected cases did not result in any recurrences within the field of  
349 a bilateral template dissection and did not compromise oncological outcomes, exem-  
350 plifying that when RPLND is a fundamentally important for cure, referral to high vol-  
351 ume centres with experienced uro-oncology surgeons is paramount. <sup>(70, 71)</sup> Robotic  
352 RPLND in the post-chemotherapy setting is increasingly utilized. Small series have  
353 shown significant decreases in peri-operative morbidity, rates of retrograde ejacula-  
354 tion and hospital length of stay without compromise of oncological outcomes alt-  
355 hough long-term follow-up is not yet present. <sup>(72, 73, 74)</sup>  
356  
357 For those AYA patients where chemotherapy remains essential for cure, we have a  
358 responsibility to develop less toxic but equally effective treatment regimens. Adult  
359 BEP chemotherapy (cisplatin, etoposide and bleomycin) remains the gold standard



360 treatment.<sup>(75)</sup> Carboplatin is a platinum agent that has not been demonstrated to  
361 have the same long-term toxicity profile as cisplatin. Historically, carboplatin regi-  
362 mens have been tested against cisplatin in the hope that carboplatin may provide  
363 equally effective survival outcomes but with less morbidity.<sup>(76, 77, 78)</sup> These trials had  
364 concluded it was less effective than cisplatin. Recent reviews comparing these and  
365 other cisplatin and carboplatin outcomes, suggests we should re-consider its use  
366 across all ages, as inadequate dosing and frequency of delivery could account for  
367 the discrepancy in outcomes documented in the era before the use of stem-cell fac-  
368 tor support.<sup>(79, 80)</sup> Pharmacogenomics studies may further help finesse decision mak-  
369 ing.

370  
371

372 **How do we achieve this?**

373 As a result of the above, the international GCT community needs to continue to ad-  
374 vocate for all GCT patients, but in particular for AYA patients with testicular cancer  
375 where arguably much more remains unknown and unresolved. MaGIC (the Malig-  
376 nant Germ Cell International Consortium; <https://www.magicconsortium.com/>) is an  
377 international collaboration comprising clinicians and scientists from pediatric, medi-  
378 cal, gynecological, clinical oncology and allied disciplines. International platforms  
379 such as MaGIC can begin to address geographic and ethnic variation in outcomes  
380 and ensure biology is embedded in new trial development. This strategy should allow  
381 us to locate these vulnerable subgroups of patients, reduce the burden of therapy  
382 and engage the groups of patients that are most at risk of late-effects in tailored re-

383 search programs. More locally, discussion of teenage GCT patients should always  
384 take place in a disease-specific multidisciplinary meeting with combined medical and  
385 paediatric oncology representation. This will facilitate sharing of expertise, promote  
386 enrolment into international trials open to AYA patients and adherence to national  
387 guidance to support safe delivery of care and minimize treatment related mortality.

388

389

390

### 391 **Conclusion**

392 The incidence of testicular cancer is increasing across all ages within the AYA spec-  
393 trum (13-39y). Compared with older adult patients, AYA patients present with a high-  
394 er burden of disease and with more NSGCT histologies which require more intensive  
395 treatment for cure; this inevitably translates into an increased burden of late effects.  
396 By contrast, for men aged >40y, the prevalence remains stable. Thus, for those pa-  
397 tients with the most life years left to live, the numbers of patients requiring the most  
398 morbid treatment are increasing.

399 The identified miRNA signature, applicable across all patient ages, offers the poten-  
400 tial for a universal test for diagnosis and disease-monitoring. Although the genomic  
401 and protein-coding gene molecular differences observed between pediatric and adult  
402 GCTs<sup>(19)</sup>  
403 ) may well be triggered by puberty, most, but not all, AYA GCT are likely to be 'adult'  
404 tumors biologically, the lack of focus on this cohort to date makes this largely an as-  
405 sumption. Consequently, clinical management based simply on chronological patient

406 age may well be suboptimal. Future research focused on AYAs, particularly the  
407 younger AYA group (13-24y), may alleviate these challenges and facilitate more per-  
408 sonalized clinical management including removal of disparities in access to health  
409 care as an issue. Moreover, such work may also allow more accurate prognostic risk  
410 groups to be defined and assist the development of novel therapies that have in-  
411 creased efficacy in poor-prognosis tumors and/or cause less long-term toxicity in  
412 good-prognosis patients. All this will be best achieved within a collaborative, interna-  
413 tional forum.

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417 **Conflict of Interest Statement:**

418

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420

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423 St Baldrick's Foundation

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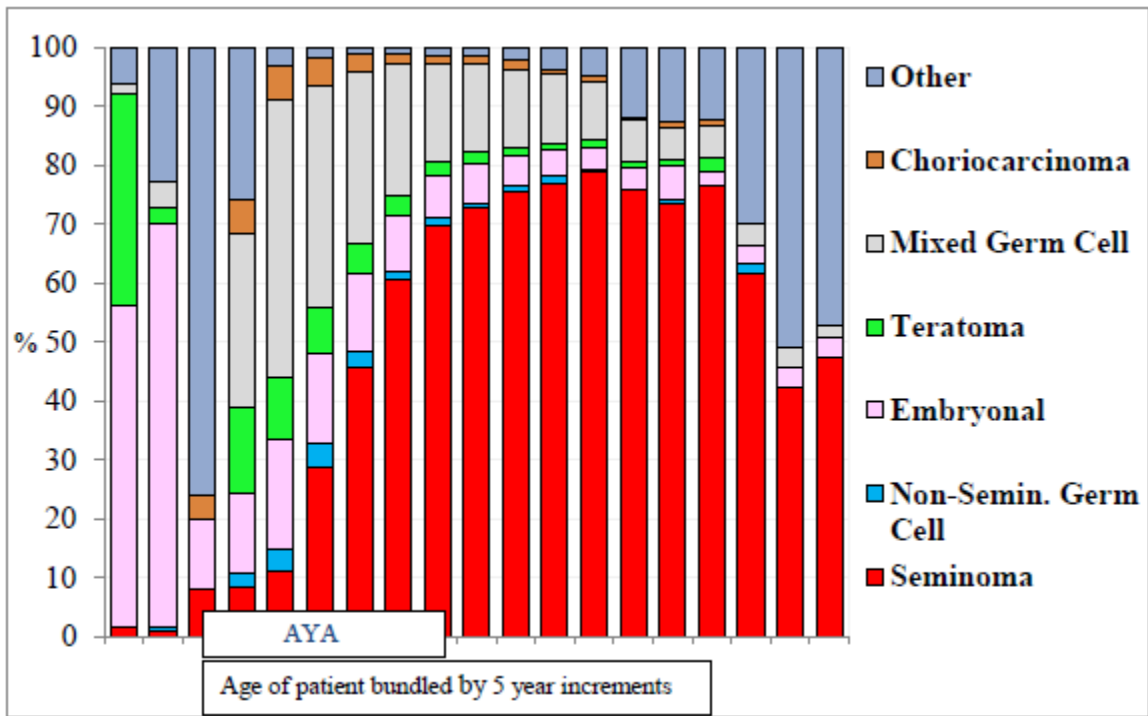
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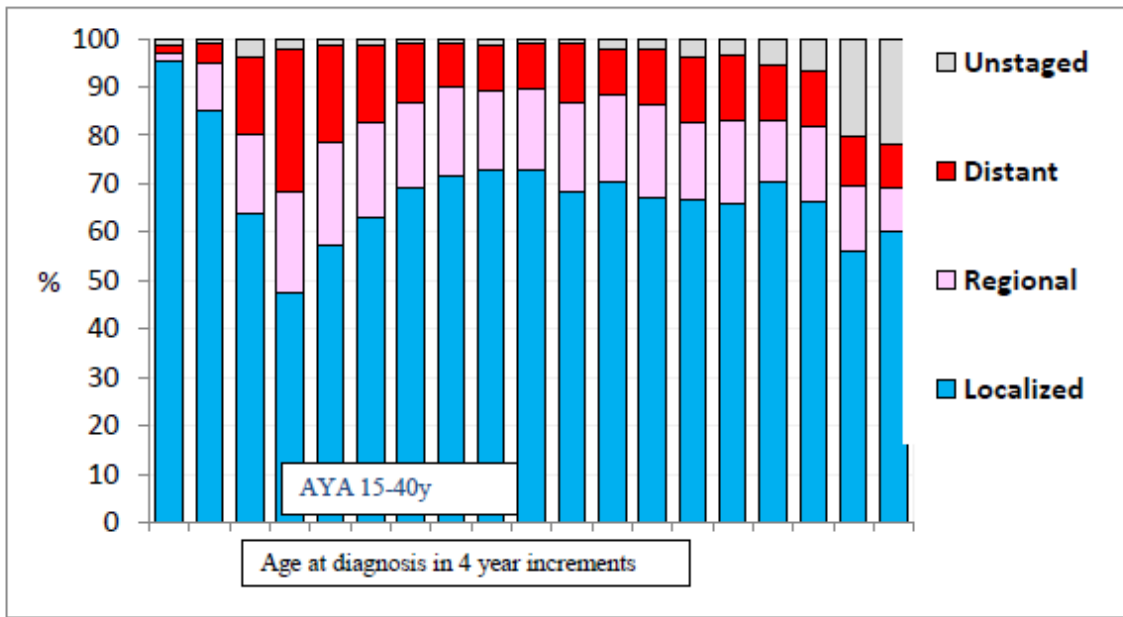
819 FIGURE 1 Histology Distribution of Testis Cancer, 2000-2011, SEER18, by Age

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824 FIGURE 2 Distribution of Stage of Testis Cancer, SEER 18, 2000-2011, by Age

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