

About Cancer in Canada

Introduction to Statistics*

This year in Canada alone, there will be an estimated 173,800 new cases of cancer, with an estimated 76,200 of these cases resulting in death. Lung cancer accounts for 27 per cent of all cancer deaths each year and is the leading cause of cancer death for both men and women.

Three types of cancer account for the majority of new cancer cases for both men and women. In men, prostate, lung and colorectal cancers rank one, two and three. In women, it's breast, lung and colorectal cancers.

Every hour of every day, approximately 20 Canadians will be diagnosed with cancer, and 8 people will die from cancer.

Incidence and Mortality

The increased number of new cases of cancer, exclusive of non-melanoma skin cancers, is mainly due to a growing and aging population.

Between 1997 and 2006, incidence rates declined by at least 2% per year for stomach and lung cancers in males and for larynx cancer in both sexes.

Excluding lung cancer, the overall cancer mortality rate has dropped by 20% in females since 1981.

Between 1996 and 2005, overall mortality rates declined significantly for both sexes. The rates declined by at least 2% per year for lung, oral, prostate and larynx cancers in males; cervical cancer in females; and stomach cancer and non-Hodgkin lymphoma in both sexes.

Age and Sex Distribution of Cancer

The risk of cancer increases with age, with 43% of new cancer cases and 61% of cancer deaths occurring among those 70 years of age and older.

The incidence and mortality rates for males surpass those for females around age 55.

Mortality is declining for males in most age groups and for females, under 70 years of age.

Trends in Incidence and Mortality

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*Data contained on this page taken from 'Canadian Cancer Statistics 2010.'