

Fast Facts About Cancer

The annual number of new cancer cases in the world is predicted to increase from over 14 million in 2012 to almost 22 million in 2030 due to population growth and aging alone.¹

The lifetime probability of being diagnosed with cancer in the U.S. is 39.7 percent for men and 37.6 percent for women, which is a little more than 1 in 3.²

It is estimated that 609,640 deaths from cancer occurred in the U.S. in 2018,³ with a significant portion of these who were not candidates for radiation treatment because of metastatic disease, or the spread of their cancer beyond where radiation has been traditionally effective (i.e., local or early stage cancer). Recent landmark studies have demonstrated a significant benefit of combining radiation treatment with other cancer treatments (chemotherapy, immunotherapy) to produce up to a tripling in progression-free survival.⁴

Global Statistics⁵

- Cancer is the second leading cause of death globally and is responsible for an estimated 9.6 million deaths in 2018 - about 1 in 6 deaths is due to cancer.
- The most common cancers are:
 - Lung (2.09 million cases)
 - Breast (2.09 million cases)
 - Colorectal (1.80 million cases)
 - Prostate (1.28 million cases)
 - Skin cancer (non-melanoma – 1.04 million cases)
 - Stomach (1.03 million cases)
- The most common causes of cancer death are cancers of:
 - Lung (1.76 million deaths)
 - Colorectal (862,000 deaths)
 - Stomach (783,000 deaths)
 - Liver (782,000 deaths)
 - Breast (627,000 deaths)
- Approximately 70 percent of death from cancer occur in low and middle-income countries.

U.S. Statistics

- By 2020, cancer will be the leading cause of death in the U.S., surpassing heart disease.⁶
- When cancer is detected early, and when it has not metastasized, a patient typically has a 9 in 10 chance of surviving beyond five years. When cancer is detected late, and it has metastasized, a patient's five-year survival rate is significantly reduced to a 1 in 10 chance.⁷

¹ A. Jemal, P. Vineis, F. Bray, L. Torre, D. Forman, *The Cancer Atlas Second Edition* (Atlanta: American Cancer Society, Inc., 2014), p. 35.

² <https://www.cancer.org/latest-news/facts-and-figures-2018-rate-of-deaths-from-cancer-continues-decline.html>

³ <https://www.cancer.org/latest-news/facts-and-figures-2018-rate-of-deaths-from-cancer-continues-decline.html>

⁴ Palma et al. Presented at ASTRO Annual Meeting, San Antonio, TX, Oct. 2018.

⁵ Data compiled from the World Health Organization <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/cancer>

⁶ *Ann Intern Med.* 2018;169(12):877-878

⁷ Data compiled from NCI SEER 18 (2007-2013)

- It is estimated that more than 1.7 million new cancer cases are expected to be diagnosed in 2019 (this estimate does not include non-invasive cancer of any site except urinary bladder, nor does it include basal cell or squamous cell skin cancers).⁶
- Approximately 606,880 Americans are expected to die of cancer in 2019, which translates to about 1,660 deaths per day.⁸
- An estimated 228,150 new cases of lung cancer will be diagnosed in 2019 and an estimated 142,760 deaths from lung cancer will occur in 2019.⁷
- An estimated 174,650 new cases of prostate cancer will be diagnosed during 2019. The five-year survival for disease diagnosed at a distant stage is 30 percent.⁷
- An estimated 268,600 new cases of breast cancer will be diagnosed in women and 2,670 in men in 2019, and an estimated 42,260 breast cancer deaths (41,760 women, 500 men) will occur in 2019.⁷

Global Burden of Cancer⁹

- India, China and other East and Central Asian countries account for nearly half of the world's new cancer cases and deaths.
- Economically developing countries like China, Brazil and India are facing serious shortages in their cancer treatment capacity in the coming decades and may be poorly equipped to deal with them.
- China accounts for 50 percent of all cancer cases in Southern, Eastern and Southeastern Asia.
- The four nations with the highest risk of cancer by age 75 are Denmark, France, Norway, Belgium. These countries also have the highest prevalence of cancer survivors.
- Smoking causes more than 16 different types of cancer and accounts for 20 percent of all global cancer deaths.
- Lung cancer accounts for one in five cancer deaths worldwide and it is the leading cause of new cases and deaths among men.
- Breast cancer is the leading cause of new cases and deaths among women, and it is the most commonly diagnosed cancer among women in most countries worldwide.
- Emerging evidence indicates that being overweight is linked with increased risk of cancer recurrence and decreased cancer survival.
- The U.S. has the third highest prevalence of overweight and obesity among men in the world at 72.5 percent, followed by Samoa at 82.6 percent and Kuwait, which is tied with Qatar at 78.1 percent.

“The story of cancer isn’t the story of doctors who struggle and survive, moving from institution to another. It’s the story of patients who struggle and survive, moving from one embankment of illness to another. Resilience, inventiveness and survivorship – qualities often ascribed to great physicians are reflected qualities, emanating first from those who struggle with illness.”

— **Siddhartha Mukherjee, The Emperor of All Maladies**

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¹ Data compiled from the American Cancer Society, Cancer Facts and Figures 2019:

⁹Data compiled from the Cancer Atlas <http://canceratlas.cancer.org/news/fast-facts-about-the-cancer-atlas/>