

10 December 2008

Coverage
England

Theme
Health



Survival stable for common cancers in England

Figures released by the Office for National Statistics today show that survival continues to vary widely between different types of cancer.

Over 96 per cent of men diagnosed in England in 2000-2004 with cancer of the testis survived five years, as did 81 per cent of women diagnosed with breast cancer.

In contrast, five-year survival from lung cancer was less than 7 per cent for men and just over 8 per cent for women.

The report, produced jointly with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, shows that for most cancers five-year survival varied by one per cent or less compared to figures for patients diagnosed during 1999-2003, improving slightly for about half of the 21 most common cancers.

Table 1: Five-year relative survival (%) for adults (15-99 years) diagnosed during 1999-2003 and 2000-2004, 4 major cancers, England

Cancer		Patients diagnosed 1999-2003		Patients diagnosed 2000-2004		Difference ¹
		No. of patients	Five-year survival (%)	No. of patients	Five-year survival (%)	
Breast	Women	159,885	81.2	166,601	81.1	0.0
Colon	Men	39,178	49.7	42,221	49.0	-0.7
	Women	37,896	51.1	40,486	50.1	-1.0
Lung	Men	78,014	6.5	82,821	6.5	0.0
	Women	50,434	7.6 ²	55,012	8.2	..
Prostate	Men	115,769	75.0	130,152	75.8	+0.8

¹ Absolute difference between survival estimates for the two periods. Survival figures are rounded to one decimal place, but differences between the two periods are based on the exact figures. The apparent discrepancy for breast cancer is due to rounding.

² This figure is unstandardised as an age-standardised survival estimate could not be obtained.
.. not available.

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Charts showing the survival figures for the 21 common cancers in descending order of survival by sex, and more detailed tables giving both one- and five-year survival by sex and age group for the 21 common cancers for adults diagnosed during 2000-2004, followed up to the end of 2005 are available on the National Statistics website:

<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=14007>

A table showing five-year age-standardised relative survival (per cent) for adults (15-99 years) diagnosed during 1999-2003 and 2000-2004, in England for 21 common cancers by sex is attached.

BACKGROUND NOTES

1. The survival estimates are averaged over two overlapping periods 1999-2003 and 2000-2004 (patients diagnosed over five years).
2. Previous analyses for England and Wales have been published [<http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=14007>]. However, it should be noted that these analyses were incorrectly labelled as being for "England" only, but have now been correctly relabelled to "England and Wales".
3. As cancer survival varies with age at diagnosis, figures have been age-standardised to control for changes in the age profile of cancer patients over time. This enables figures for different time periods to be compared. Survival for some cancers could not be age-standardised. Where the estimates are standardised for one period and unstandardised for the other no difference is reported.
4. The survival figures published here were produced in collaboration between ONS and a team at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM) which is funded in part by a grant from Cancer Research UK.
5. The National Cancer Intelligence Centre at ONS, and the LSHTM, wish to acknowledge the work of the regional cancer registries in England over the years that the national cancer registration scheme has been in operation.
6. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available from the press office.
7. **National Statistics** are produced to high professional standards set out in the National Statistics Code of Practice. They undergo regular quality assurance reviews to ensure that they meet customer needs. They are produced free from any political interference. © Crown copyright 2008.

Table 2 - Five-year age-standardised relative survival (%)¹ for adults (15-99 years) diagnosed during 1999-2003 and 2000-2004: 21 common cancers, by sex, England

		Patients diagnosed 1999-2003 and followed up to 2004				Patients diagnosed 2000-2004 and followed up to 2005				Difference ²
		No. of patients	Five-year survival			No. of patients	Five-year survival			
			%	95% CI			%	95% CI		
Bladder³	Men	28,625	60.5	59.6	61.4	29,456	57.5	56.6	58.4	-3.0
	Women	11,232	52.2	50.9	53.5	11,570	47.8	46.5	49.1	-4.4
Brain	Men ⁴	8,764	12.1	11.2	13.0	9,151	12.2	11.3	13.0	0.1
	Women	6,105	15.8	14.7	16.9	6,441	16.3	15.2	17.4	0.5
Breast	Women	159,885	81.2	80.8	81.5	166,601	81.1	80.8	81.5	0.0
Cervix	Women	11,253	63.4	62.2	64.5	11,458	63.4	62.3	64.6	0.0
Colon	Men	39,178	49.7	48.9	50.6	42,221	49.0	48.2	49.8	-0.7
	Women	37,896	51.1	50.3	51.9	40,486	50.1	49.4	50.8	-1.0
Hodgkin's disease	Men ⁴	3,208	80.2	78.6	81.9	3,300	82.7	80.9	84.3	..
	Women	2,302	82.9	81.0	84.8	2,415	82.4	80.5	84.3	-0.5
Kidney	Men	13,570	45.1	43.9	46.3	15,453	46.3	45.2	47.5	1.2
	Women	8,143	45.8	44.4	47.3	9,171	48.3	46.9	49.7	2.5
Larynx	Men	6,702	64.2	62.3	66.0	7,084	64.6	62.8	66.4	0.4
Leukaemia	Men	13,427	39.7	38.4	41.0	14,516	39.4	38.2	40.6	-0.3
	Women	10,025	40.1	38.7	41.4	10,709	40.1	38.8	41.3	0.0
Lung	Men	78,014	6.5	6.3	6.8	82,821	6.5	6.3	6.8	0.0
	Women ⁴	50,434	7.6	7.2	7.9	55,012	8.2	7.9	8.6	..
Melanoma	Men	12,409	81.1	79.8	82.4	14,202	80.6	79.4	81.7	-0.5
	Women	16,049	89.9	89.0	90.8	17,928	89.5	88.6	90.3	-0.5
Myeloma	Men	7,140	27.7	26.1	29.2	7,762	28.1	26.5	29.6	0.4
	Women	6,279	27.0	25.4	28.6	6,685	27.8	26.2	29.4	0.8
Non-Hodgkin lymphoma	Men	18,744	51.5	50.4	52.6	20,208	51.9	50.9	52.9	0.4
	Women	16,599	57.6	56.5	58.7	17,954	58.2	57.2	59.2	0.6
Oesophagus	Men	17,014	8.9	8.3	9.6	18,641	9.3	8.6	9.9	0.3
	Women	10,084	12.0	11.0	12.9	10,699	11.8	10.9	12.8	-0.2
Ovary	Women	24,610	39.2	38.4	40.0	26,325	38.6	37.8	39.4	-0.6
Pancreas	Men ⁴	11,563	2.5	2.1	2.9	12,658	2.7	2.3	3.1	..
	Women ⁴	12,087	2.3	2.0	2.7	13,169	2.4	2.0	2.8	0.0
Prostate	Men	115,769	75.0	74.4	75.6	130,152	75.8	75.3	76.4	0.8
Rectum	Men	30,045	51.9	50.9	52.8	31,089	51.2	50.3	52.2	-0.6
	Women	20,357	54.8	53.8	55.9	19,956	53.7	52.7	54.8	-1.1
Stomach	Men	21,216	13.3	12.6	13.9	21,909	13.7	13.0	14.3	0.4
	Women	11,306	16.1	15.1	17.1	11,913	16.3	15.3	17.2	0.2
Testis	Men ⁴	7,826	96.4	95.8	97.1	7,861	96.5	95.9	96.9	..
Uterus	Women ⁴	22,088	76.5	75.6	77.4	24,956	77.0	76.1	77.8	..

¹ Relative survival is the probability of survival (shown here as a percentage) after correction for other causes of death. Relative survival varies with age, and the age profile of cancer patients can change with time, so the estimates are age-adjusted to facilitate comparison. They are shown with their 95% confidence intervals.

² Difference between survival estimates for the two overlapping periods. Survival figures are rounded to one decimal place, but the differences are based on the exact underlying figures. Apparent discrepancies are thus due to rounding.

³ Changes in the classification and coding of bladder cancer tumours in Europe in 1995 were progressively implemented in the UK from 2000. Some bladder tumours – transitional cell papillomas – were previously coded as malignant by some cancer registries. Survival rates for transitional cell papillomas are high, so defining them as malignant inflates the overall survival rate from bladder cancer. The standardisation of registration practice means that transitional cell papillomas should now be classified as non-malignant by all cancer registries. The apparent decline in survival arises because of this re-classification.

⁴ Italicised survival figures are unstandardised - age-standardised survival estimates could not be obtained.

.. Where the estimates are standardised for one period and unstandardised for the other no difference is reported.