



Canadian Statistics on Cancer 2008

Cancer in Canada: Fast Facts

The Canadian Cancer Society released its *Canadian Statistics on Cancer 2008* report on April 9, 2008. Overall, there are no major changes from last year.

The overall incidence and death rates for most types of cancer have remained stable or declined in the past decade. This means that the personal risk of developing cancer remains stable.

Cancer in general

- Over 200 diseases for which there is no single treatment/therapy.
- Leading cause of death in Quebec since 2005.
- Leading cause of premature death in Canada.
- In Quebec, someone is diagnosed with cancer every 13 minutes, and someone dies of cancer every 27 minutes.
- In Canada, someone is diagnosed with cancer every 3 minutes, and someone dies of cancer every 7 minutes.
- More than one in three people — 40% of Canadian women and 45% of Canadian men — will develop cancer during their lifetime. 24% of the women and almost 29% of the men (about 1 in 4) will die of cancer. And within a few years, one in 2 people will develop cancer during their lifetime.

New cases and deaths

The number of new cancer cases and cancer-related deaths continues to rise steadily due to Canada's growing and ageing population.

- In 2008:
 - There will be an estimated 42,100 new cases of cancer in Quebec (166,400 in Canada), 1,100 more than last year (6,500 more in Canada).
 - There will be an estimated 19,700 cancer-related deaths in Quebec (73,800 in Canada), 200 more than last year (1,100 more in Canada).

Survival

- For diagnoses made between 2001 and 2003, the five-year relative survival rate for all cancers combined in Canada was 62%.

Prevalence

- In 2004, an estimated 853,400 Canadians - 396,900 men (1 in 40) and 456,500 women (1 in 35) had cancer, 21% more than in 1998 (679,800 men and women). This increase in the number of cancer survivors is due to the growing number of new cases and better cancer survival rates.

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Cancer among men

- *Overall death rate:* Since 1988, the overall cancer death rate among Canadian men has been declining as a result of lower death rates for lung, colorectal and other cancers.
- *Overall incidence rate:* The overall cancer incidence rate among Canadian men rose slightly in the early 1990s (due to the higher incidence of prostate cancer during this period) and then declined sharply. The gradual decline in cancer incidence for men is expected to continue.

Between 1995 and 2004, the following statistically significant changes (2% or more per year) were observed:

- Incidence rates:
 - Lower incidence of larynx, lung and stomach cancers
 - Higher incidence of thyroid and liver cancers
- Death rates:
 - Lower death rates from stomach, larynx, prostate, oral and lung cancers and non-Hodgkin and Hodgkin lymphomas

Cancer among women

- *Overall death rate:* The overall cancer death rate among Canadian women has remained relatively stable since 1979. Excluding lung cancer, death rates for other cancers have dropped by a significant 20% in the past 30 years.
- *Overall incidence rate:* The overall cancer incidence rate among Canadian women has risen slowly and steadily (in large part, due to the higher incidence of lung cancer), but may stabilize down the road.

Between 1995 and 2004, the following statistically significant changes (2% or more per year) were observed:

- Incidence rates:
 - Lower incidence of larynx, stomach, brain cancers
 - Higher incidence of thyroid cancer
- Death rates:
 - Lower death rates from Hodgkin lymphoma, cervical and stomach cancers



Breast cancer

- Breast cancer remains the most frequently diagnosed cancer among Canadian women.
- In 2008, an estimated 5,900 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer in Quebec (22,400 in Canada), and an estimated 1,350 will die of the disease (5,300 in Canada).
- One in 9 women is expected to develop breast cancer during her lifetime; one in 28 will die of the disease.
- Since 1999, the breast cancer incidence rate has declined by a significant 1.7% per year, on average.
- The breast cancer death rate has declined by more than 25% since 1986.
- In Canada, the five-year relative survival rate for breast cancer is 87% (among women diagnosed between 2001 and 2003).

Prostate cancer

- Prostate cancer remains the most frequently diagnosed cancer among Canadian men.
- In 2008, an estimated 4,400 men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in Quebec (24,700 in Canada) and an estimated 870 will die of the disease (4,300 in Canada).
- One in 7 men is expected to develop prostate cancer during his lifetime; one in 27 will die of the disease.
- The estimation method for new prostate cancer cases has changed this year. The trend for new prostate cancer cases was irregular—due to two periods of sharp rises in new cases, followed by drop-offs. The sharp rises were most likely due to the more widespread use of prostate specific antigen (PSA) tests. Since the trend has stabilized in recent years, a different estimation method was established. This method more accurately reflects current trends in new prostate cancer cases.
- A man's odds of developing prostate cancer are about the same now as they were in the late 1990s.
- Prostate cancer death rates declined significantly between 1995 and 2004.
- In Canada, the five-year relative survival rate for prostate cancer is 95% (among men diagnosed between 2001 and 2003).



Lung cancer

- Lung cancer remains the leading cause of cancer-related death among both women and men: 6,300 people in Quebec (2,700 women and 3,600 men), representing 31% of all lung-cancer-related death in the country (20,200 deaths in Canada: 9,200 women and 11,000 men).
- This year, in Quebec, an estimated 3,400 women (11,300 in Canada) and 4,200 men (12,600 in Canada) will be diagnosed with lung cancer.
- One in 16 women is expected to develop lung cancer during her lifetime; one in 18 will die of the disease. One in 12 men is expected to develop lung cancer during his lifetime; one in 13 will die of the disease.
- Lung cancer incidence and death rates among women have been rising since 1979 and the trend continues. Since smoking rates among women only began declining in the mid 1980s, the associated decline in incidence and death rates is not yet observable.
- Among men, rising lung cancer incidence and death rates began to level off in the mid-1980s and have been declining ever since.
- In Canada, the five-year relative survival rate for lung cancer is 15% (18% among women and 13% among men diagnosed with the disease between 2001 and 2003).

Colorectal cancer

- Colorectal cancer is still the second leading cause of cancer-related death in Canada.
- In 2008, in Quebec, an estimated 5,600 people (21,500 in Canada) – 2,500 women (9,700 in Canada) and 3,100 men (11,800 in Canada) – will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer, and an estimated 2,400 people (8,900 in Canada) – 1,100 women and 1,300 men (4,100 women and 4,800 men in Canada) will die of the disease.
- Death rates continue to decline significantly among both men and women.
- One in 16 women is expected to develop colorectal cancer during her lifetime; one in 31 will die of the disease. One in 14 men is expected to develop colorectal cancer during his lifetime; one in 27 will die of the disease.
- More than 90% of all colorectal cancer cases are diagnosed in Canadians over the age of 50. Based on scientific data, there would be 17% fewer deaths from colorectal cancer if 70% of Canadian men and women aged 50 to 74 underwent fecal occult blood testing every two years.
- The CSS is eagerly awaiting an imminent announcement from the *ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux*¹ regarding the implementation of an organized screening program for colorectal cancer.

¹ More than 90% of all colorectal cancer cases are diagnosed in Canadians over the age of 50. Based on scientific data, there would be 17% fewer deaths from colorectal cancer if 70% of Canadian men and women aged 50 to 74 underwent fecal occult blood testing every two years.



- Death rates from colorectal cancer continue to decline significantly among both men and women.
- In Canada, the five-year relative survival rate for colorectal cancer is 62% (among those diagnosed between 2001 and 2003).

Canadian Cancer Statistics 2008 is prepared, printed and distributed with the collaboration of the Canadian Cancer Society, the Public Health Agency of Canada, the National Cancer Institute of Canada, Statistics Canada, provincial/territorial cancer registries, as well as university-based and provincial/territorial agency-based cancer researchers. The special report on childhood cancer (contained in the 2008 report) was written in partnership with the C17 Research Network, an organization grouping 17 Canadian paediatric oncology centres.

The Canadian Cancer Society is a national community-based organization of volunteers whose mission is the eradication of cancer and the enhancement of the quality of life of people living with cancer. For more information on cancer, visit our website at www.cancer.ca or call our toll-free, bilingual Cancer Information Service at 1 888 939-3333.

-30-

Note: Survival rates are calculated from the date of diagnosis to five years after diagnosis. In Quebec, the method for determining the date of diagnosis differs from that used by other provinces. Consequently, Quebec survival statistics cannot be compared to those of other provinces.

Information:

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