



Canadian  
Cancer  
Society

## Media backgrounder: Canadian Cancer Statistics 2012

09 May 2012

TORONTO -

### **Cancer in Canada: Fast facts**

*Canadian Cancer Statistics 2012* was released today by the Canadian Cancer Society.

### **Current estimates of new cases and deaths**

In 2012:

- An estimated 186,400 new cases of cancer will be diagnosed in Canada (not including approximately 81,300 cases of non-melanoma skin cancer).
- There will be an estimated 75,700 deaths from cancer.

Every hour of every day, an average of 21 people will be diagnosed with some type of cancer, and nine people will die from the disease.

- Of the newly diagnosed cases, more than one half (53%) will be prostate, lung, colorectal and breast cancers.
- Canadians aged 50–79 years will represent almost 70% of all new cancer cases and 62% of cancer deaths in 2012. The highest proportion of new cancer cases (51,200 cases or 28%) will occur in Canadians aged 60–69, while the highest proportion of deaths from cancer (25,400 deaths or 34%) is expected in those aged 80 and older.

The number of new cancer cases continues to rise steadily as the Canadian population grows and ages.

Between 1988 and 2007, overall cancer death rates dropped by 21% in men and 9% in women.

### **Prostate cancer**

- Prostate cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer among Canadian men (27%).



- In 2012, it is estimated that approximately 26,500 Canadian men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer, and about 4,000 will die from the disease.
- The incidence and death rates have been declining slowly, with death rates declining significantly by 4.3% per year between 2001 and 2007, which likely reflects increased testing for the cancer and improved treatment.

### **Breast cancer**

- Breast cancer continues to be the most commonly diagnosed cancer among Canadian women (26%).
- In 2012, it is estimated that approximately 22,700 Canadian women will be diagnosed with breast cancer, and about 5,100 will die from it.
- Although the incidence rate has been declining, the death rate has been decreasing more strongly, with a reduction of almost 40% since peaking in 1986. The decrease has been 2.2% per year since 1998. This is likely because of earlier diagnosis through screening mammography and availability of improved treatment. The breast cancer death rate is the lowest it has been since 1950.

### **Lung cancer**

- Lung cancer remains the leading cause of cancer death for both men and women.
- Lung cancer takes the lives of more Canadians than breast, prostate and colorectal cancers combined.
- Smoking causes about 85% of lung cancer cases. Another 15% of lung cancer cases are caused by radon, second-hand smoke, asbestos exposure, air pollution, lung diseases, a family history of lung cancer and exposure to certain occupational chemicals.
- In women:
  - The lung cancer incidence rate has been increasing since at least the 1960s.
  - The incidence rate increased by 1.1% per year between 1998 and 2007 but is now stabilizing.
  - The death rate for women over the same time period shows a slight increase of 0.7% per year.
- Among men, lung cancer incidence and death rates began to level off in the mid-1980s after several decades of increase and have been declining ever since. Incidence rates



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have dropped by 1.8% per year since 1998 and death rates by 2.3% per year since 1998.

The difference between the male and female trends reflects the drop in smoking that began for men in the early 1960s and in the 1980s for women.

### **Colorectal cancer**

- Although the long-term trend in the incidence rates in both sexes is complex, recently rates appear to be slowly declining. For both men and women, the incidence rate has decreased by 0.8% per year since 2000.
- Death rates continue to decline for both men and women – by 2.6% per year in men since 2003 and 1.8% per year in women since 1998. This is likely the result of improvements in treatment, such as chemotherapy, and increasing availability and uptake of screening.

*Canadian Cancer Statistics 2012* is prepared, printed and distributed through a collaboration of the Canadian Cancer Society, the Public Health Agency of Canada, Statistics Canada and provincial and territorial cancer registries.

### **About the Canadian Cancer Society**

The Canadian Cancer Society (CCS) is the only national charity that supports Canadians with all cancers in communities across the country. No other organization does what we do; we are the voice for Canadians who care about cancer. We fund groundbreaking research, provide a support system for all those affected by cancer and advocate to governments for important social change.

Help us make a difference. Call 1-888-939-3333 or visit [cancer.ca](http://cancer.ca) today.