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## Media backgrounder #2: Cancer in Canada: Fast facts

27 May 2015

TORONTO -

Canadian Cancer Statistics 2015 was released today by the Canadian Cancer Society in collaboration with the Public Health Agency of Canada and Statistics Canada.

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

In 2015:

- An estimated 196,900 new cases of cancer will be diagnosed in Canada (not including approximately 78,300 cases of non-melanoma skin cancer).
- There will be an estimated 78,000 deaths from cancer.
- Every hour of every day, an average of 22 people will be diagnosed with some type of cancer, and about 9 people will die from the disease.
- Of the newly diagnosed cases, more than half (51%) will be prostate, breast, lung and colorectal cancers.
- Canadians aged 50–79 will represent almost 70% of all new cancer cases and almost 62% of cancer deaths in 2015. The highest proportion of new cancer cases (54,900, or 28%) will occur in Canadians aged 60–69, while the highest proportion of deaths from cancer (26,600 deaths, or 34%) is expected in those aged 80 and older.
- The number of new cancer cases and cancer deaths continues to rise steadily as the Canadian population grows and ages.

### **Prostate cancer**

- Prostate cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer among Canadian men (24% of all new cases of cancer in men).
- In 2015, it is estimated that approximately 24,000 Canadian men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer, and about 4,100 will die from the disease.



- The incidence and death rates have both been declining. The death rate has been declining significantly by 1.6% per year between 2006 and 2010, which likely reflects improved treatments for this cancer.

### **Breast cancer**

- Breast cancer continues to be the most commonly diagnosed cancer among Canadian women (26% of all new cases of cancer in women).
- In 2015, it is estimated that approximately 25,200 Canadian women will be diagnosed with breast cancer, and about 5,100 will die from it.
- Both the incidence and death rates have been declining, and the death rate has been declining significantly with a reduction of 44% since peaking in 1986. The decrease in the death rate has been 2.5% per year between 2001 and 2010. 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.
- Between 1986 and 2009, 23,721 breast cancer deaths were avoided due to improved treatments and greater uptake of mammography screening.

### **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.
- Tobacco use causes more than 85% of lung cancer cases. Other causes of lung cancer include radon and asbestos exposure, air pollution, certain 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 but stabilized between 2006 and 2010.
  - The death rate for women between 2001 and 2010 shows a slight increase of 0.4% per year.



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- In men:
  - The lung cancer incidence and death rates began to level off in the mid to late 1980s after several decades of increase, and have been declining ever since.
  - The incidence rates dropped by 1.9% per year between 2001 and 2010 and death rates by 2.3% per year between 2001 and 2010.

The difference between the male and female trends reflects the drop in smoking that began for men in the early 1960s and much later for women in the 1980s. Between 1989 and 2010, 23,264 lung cancer deaths were avoided as a result of the decrease in death rate since 1988.

### **Colorectal cancer**

- Between 2001 and 2010, the incidence rate for men decreased by 0.7% per year, and the incidence rate for women decreased by 0.6% per year.
- The death rates continued to decline for both men and women – by 2.5% per year in men between 2004 and 2010 and 1.8% per year in women between 2001 and 2010. This is likely the result of improvements in treatment, such as chemotherapy, and increasing availability and uptake of screening.

Canadian Cancer Statistics 2015 was prepared through a partnership 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.