



Canadian
Cancer
Society

Media backgrounder #2: Cancer in Canada: Fast facts

19 October 2016

TORONTO -

Canadian Cancer Statistics 2016 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 2016:

- An estimated 202,400 new cases of cancer will be diagnosed in Canada (excluding non-melanoma skin cancers).
- There will be an estimated 78,800 deaths from cancer.

Every hour of every day, an average of 23 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 (50%) will be prostate, breast, lung and colorectal cancers.
- Canadians aged 50–79 will represent 70% of all new cancer cases and almost 62% of cancer deaths in 2016. The highest proportion of new cancer cases (56,400, or 28%) will occur in Canadians aged 60–69, while the highest proportion of deaths from cancer (26,900 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 (21% of all new cases of cancer in men).
- In 2016, it is estimated that approximately 21,600 Canadian men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer, and about 4,000 will die from the disease.



- The incidence and death rates have both been declining. The death rate has been declining significantly by 3.1% per year between 2003 and 2012, which likely reflect 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 2016, it is estimated that approximately 25,700 Canadian women will be diagnosed with breast cancer, and about 4,900 will die from it.
- The death rate has declined 44% since peaking in 1987. In recent years (2003-2012), the death rate has decreased an average of 2.6% per year. The declines are attributed to earlier diagnosis through screening mammography and the availability of improved treatment. The breast cancer death rate is currently the lowest it has been since 1950.
- Between 1987 and 2012, it is estimated that over 32,000 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.
- In 2016, it is estimated that approximately 28,400 Canadians will be diagnosed with lung cancer, and about 20,800 will die from it.
- 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:
 - In 2016, it is estimated that approximately 14,000 Canadian women will be diagnosed with lung cancer, and about 9,800 will die from it.
 - The lung cancer incidence rate had been increasing since at least the 1960s but has recently leveled off (2006 to 2010).
 - Similarly, the death rate for women had been increasing but recently leveled off (2006 and 2012).



- In men:
 - In 2016, it is estimated that approximately 14,400 Canadian men will be diagnosed with lung cancer, and about 10,900 will die from it.
 - 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 1.7% per year between 2001 and 2010 and death rates by 2.3% per year between 2003 and 2012.

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 2012, it is estimated that more than 31,500 lung cancer deaths were avoided as a result of the decrease in death rate since 1988.

Colorectal cancer

- In 2016, it is estimated that approximately 26,100 Canadians will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer, and about 9,300 will die from it.
 - About 14,500 men will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer and about 5000 will die from it.
 - About 11,600 women will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer and about 4300 will die from it.
 - 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 2.3% per year in men between 2004 and 2012 and 2.0% per year in women between 2003 and 2012. This is likely the result of improvements in treatment, such as chemotherapy, and increasing availability and uptake of screening.

Canadian Cancer Statistics 2016 was prepared through a partnership of the Canadian Cancer Society, the Public Health Agency of Canada, Statistics Canada and provincial and territorial cancer registries.

All incidence and death rates are age-adjusted to the 2011 Canadian population.



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About the Canadian Cancer Society

The Canadian Cancer Society is a national, community-based organization of volunteers whose mission is to eradicate cancer and enhance the quality of life of people living with cancer. Thanks to our donors and volunteers, the Society has the most impact, against the most cancers, in the most communities in Canada. Building on our progress, we are working with Canadians to change cancer forever. For more information, visit cancer.ca or call our toll-free bilingual Cancer Information Service at 1-888-939-3333 (TTY 1-866-786-3934).