

CANCER

Cancer is the second leading cause of death for both men and women. It is estimated that 790,740 new cancer cases will be diagnosed among females and more than 275,000 females will die of cancer in 2012.²⁸ Based on prior years, lung and bronchus cancer is expected to be the leading cause of cancer death among females, accounting for 72,590 deaths (26 percent of all cancer deaths), followed by breast cancer, which will be responsible for 39,510 (14 percent of deaths). Colorectal cancer, pancreatic cancer, and ovarian cancer will also be major causes of cancer

deaths among females, accounting for an additional 59,260 deaths combined.

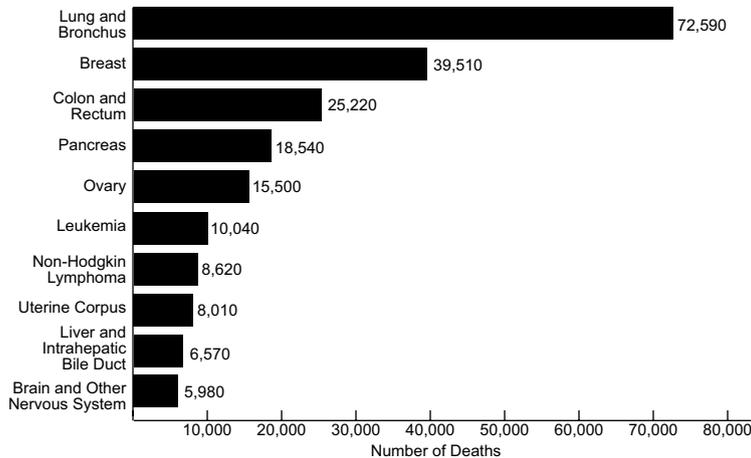
Due to the varying survival rates for different types of cancer, the most common causes of death from cancer are not always the most common types of cancer. For instance, although lung and bronchus cancer causes the greatest number of deaths, breast cancer is more commonly diagnosed among females. In 2008, invasive breast cancer occurred among 121.9 per 100,000 females, whereas lung and bronchus cancer occurred in only 54.5 per 100,000. Other types of cancer that are commonly diagnosed but are not

among the top 10 causes of cancer death include thyroid, melanoma, and cervical cancer.

Racial and ethnic disparities in cancer incidence may be explained by differences in behavioral risk factors, such as smoking, heavy alcohol consumption, obesity, poor nutrition, and physical inactivity that are largely a product of socioeconomic differences.²⁸ Racial and ethnic disparities in cancer death rates tend to be even greater than disparities in incidence rates because they are a function of differences in incidence, as well as stage at diagnosis, treatment, and patient survival, which are greatly influenced by health care access and quality.

Leading Causes of Cancer Deaths Among Females (All Ages), by Site, 2012 Estimates

Source II.11: American Cancer Society



Age-Adjusted Invasive Cancer Incidence Rates per 100,000 Females (All Ages), by Site and Race/Ethnicity, 2008

Source II.12: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and National Cancer Institute

Type of Cancer	Total (Rank)	White*	Black*	Hispanic [†]	American Indian/Alaska Native* [†]	Asian/Pacific Islander* [†]
Breast	121.9 (1)	122.6	118.0	92.8	65.6	87.9
Lung and Bronchus	54.5 (2)	56.2	49.4	26.4	38.9	26.8
Colon and Rectum	38.7 (3)	37.6	46.0	31.5	27.3	31.1
Uterine Corpus	24.4 (4)	24.8	22.6	20.4	14.2	16.6
Thyroid	18.6 (5)	19.4	11.2	18.1	9.4	19.4
Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma	15.9 (6)	16.3	10.9	14.9	10.2	11.0
Melanoma	15.1 (7)	17.2	0.9	4.1	3.5	1.0
Ovary	12.2 (8)	12.6	9.3	11.2	9.0	9.2
Kidney	11.1 (9)	11.1	12.5	11.1	11.3	5.1
Pancreas	10.5 (10)	10.1	13.9	10.0	6.8	7.9

*May include Hispanics. [†]Estimates should be interpreted with caution.

Recommended screening can help detect several forms of cancer in early, more treatable stages, including breast, colorectal, and cervical cancer, and is shown to reduce mortality.²⁸ Vaccines are also available to help prevent hepatitis B and human papillomavirus (HPV) which can cause liver and cervical cancer, respectively. The Affordable Care Act of 2010 requires health insurance plans to cover recommended preventive services, including cancer screenings and vaccinations, free-of-charge to beneficiaries.²⁹

In 2005–2009, cervical cancer incidence rates ranged from 5.8 per 100,000 American Indian/Alaska Native females to 11.8 per 100,000 Hispanic females. For Black, Hispanic, and Asian/

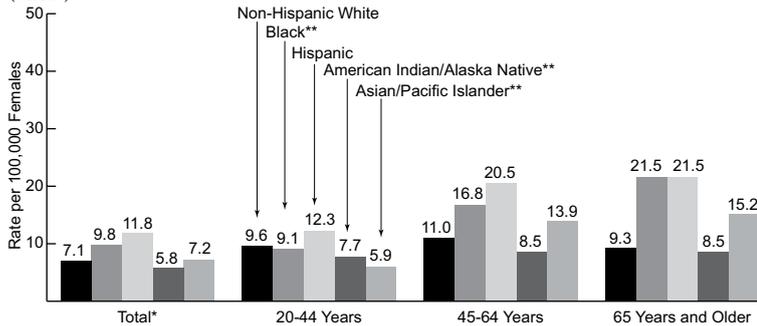
Pacific Islander females, cervical cancer incidence increased with age, which may indicate a lack of early screening and treatment that can prevent invasive cancer from developing. The Pap test, a cervical cell examination, is recommended every 3 years for women aged 21–65 years to screen for precancerous lesions and cervical cancer.³⁰ Precancerous lesions and early, localized invasive cervical cancer are highly treatable; however, about half of invasive cervical cancer cases are not detected in the early, localized stage.²⁸

Breast cancer is the most common cancer in women but is also highly treatable when diagnosed early; 99 percent of women will survive 5 years after a breast cancer diagnosis in the

early, localized stage. Mammography screening is universally recommended every other year for women aged 50–74 years.³⁰ In 2005–2009, the proportion of breast cancer cases detected in the early, localized stage ranged from 54.5 percent among Black women to 65.2 percent among non-Hispanic White women. Disparities in early detection, as well as stage-specific survival, contribute to overall survival differences by race and ethnicity. In 2004–2008, more than 90 percent of non-Hispanic White and Asian/Pacific Islander women survived 5 years after breast cancer diagnosis, compared to about 80 percent of Black and American Indian/Alaska Native women (data not shown).

Invasive Cervical Cancer Incidence Among Females, by Race/Ethnicity and Age, 2005–2009*

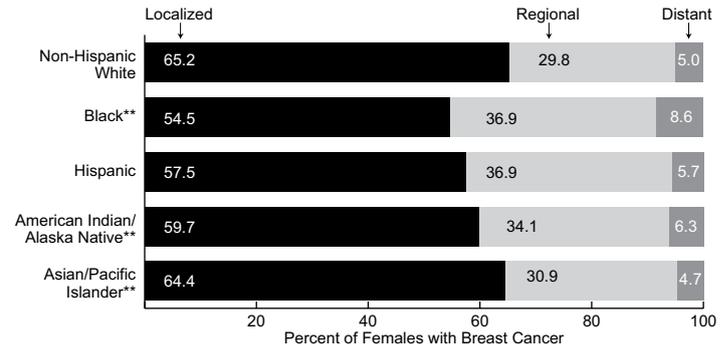
Source II.13: National Cancer Institute, Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results (SEER)



*All rates are age-adjusted; total includes females of all ages. **May include Hispanics.

Stage* at Breast Cancer Diagnosis Among Females, by Race/Ethnicity, 2005–2009

Source II.13: National Cancer Institute, Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results (SEER)



*Localized cancer is limited to the organ in which it began (no evidence of spread); regional cancer has spread beyond the primary site; distant cancer has spread to distant organs or lymph nodes; percentages may not total to 100 due to rounding. **May include Hispanics.