

Cancer incidence in Canada, 2013

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There were more than 180,000 new cases of cancer diagnosed in Canada in 2013, which corresponds to an incidence rate of 516.6 cases per 100,000 people.

Among all new cancer cases diagnosed in 2013, almost 9 in 10 (88%) were diagnosed in people aged 50 and older, 10.7% were among those aged 25 to 49, and 1.3% were among those aged under 25.

Overall, the five most commonly diagnosed cancers continued to be lung (13.5% of new cases), breast (13.0%), colorectal (12.2%), prostate (10.9%) and bladder (5.3%). Combined, these five types of cancer accounted for more than half (54.9%) of all new cancer cases.

The most commonly diagnosed cancers were different for men and women. They also varied by age group. Testicular cancer was the most common form among males aged under 25, accounting for 15.6% of all new cancer cases. For men aged 25 to 49, colorectal cancer (11.7%) was the most common. Prostate cancer (23.0%) was the most common diagnosis among men aged 50 and older.

The most commonly diagnosed cancer for females aged under 25 was thyroid (14.8%). Breast cancer was the most common diagnosis for both women aged 25 to 49 (33.9%) and women aged 50 and older (25.3%).

Note to readers

The Canadian Cancer Registry (CCR) is a dynamic database of all Canadian residents, alive or dead, who have been diagnosed with cancer since 1992. The CCR is a patient-based system that records the type and number (incidence) of primary cancers diagnosed for each person until death.

Cancer incidence refers to the number of new cases of cancer in a population over a given period, usually one year. This rate is expressed as the number of cancer cases per 100,000 people.

A new table containing age-standardization rates (table 103-0554) was created using the 2011 final postcensal Canadian population age structure. Data for both the 1991 (table 103-0553) and 2011 (table 103-0554) reference years are available in CANSIM. However, the age-standardized rates table based on the 1991 population (table 103-0553) will no longer be updated as of the 2014 diagnosis year.

The CCR can be updated with new records or changes to previous records. Therefore, the incidence counts for a given year may change from one release to the next. In particular, data for the most recent years often represent an undercount of total cases, because of a delay in the reporting of new cancer cases to the CCR. These missing cases are added with the reporting of a new reference year.

As of October 2014, Ontario implemented a new cancer reporting system (the Ontario Cancer Registry) and decommissioned the old system (the Ontario Cancer Registry Information System). The new registry follows the SEER (Surveillance, Epidemiology and End Result) multiple primary tumours and histology rules that are used by all other provinces and territories. The first year reported to the CCR using the new system is the 2013 diagnosis year. The adoption of the new rules has increased the incidence number of certain types of cancers reported in Ontario. Some of the increase for the cancers affected is attributable to the adoption of these new rules.

Cancer incidence data for Quebec are not available for the 2011, 2012 and 2013 diagnosis years within the CCR. For CANSIM tables 103-0550, 103-0553 and 103-0554, the 2010 Quebec data have been copied forward into 2011, 2012 and 2013.

Age standardization

Because cancer is more likely to occur in older people, the age structure of a population will have a strong influence on the cancer incidence rates observed. To allow for more valid comparisons over time, age-standardized rates are used to control for differences in population age structure.

The age-standardized rate is the rate that would occur if the population of interest had the same age structure as the standard population. The standard population used in this release is the Canadian population as of July 1, 1991, and July 1, 2011, according to the final postcensal estimates. Age-standardized rates for 1991 and 2011 are not comparable nor are the incidence rates.



Table 1
Top five cancers¹ in Canada, by sex, 2013

	rank	number	% of all cancers	incidence rate (per 100,000)
All cancers combined, both sexes	...	180,465	100.0	516.6
Lung and bronchus	1	24,395	13.5	69.8
Breast	2	23,440	13.0	67.1
Colorectal	3	22,075	12.2	63.2
Prostate	4	19,660	10.9	56.3
Urinary bladder (including in situ)	5	9,485	5.3	27.2
All cancers combined, males	...	91,850	100.0	530.5
Prostate	1	19,660	21.4	113.6
Lung and bronchus	2	12,715	13.8	73.4
Colorectal	3	12,155	13.2	70.2
Urinary bladder (including in situ)	4	7,220	7.9	41.7
Non-Hodgkin lymphoma	5	4,335	4.7	25.0
All cancers combined, females	...	88,615	100.0	503.0
Breast	1	23,255	26.2	132.0
Lung and bronchus	2	11,680	13.2	66.3
Colorectal	3	9,920	11.2	56.3
Corpus uteri	4	5,485	6.2	31.1
Thyroid	5	4,520	5.1	25.7

... not applicable

1. Excluding the "other, ill-defined and unknown sites" category.

Source(s): CANSIM tables [103-0550](#) and [051-0001](#).

Available in CANSIM: tables [103-0550](#), [103-0553](#) and [103-0554](#).

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [3207](#).

The fact sheet "[Cancer incidence in Canada, 2013](#)," from the publication *Health Fact Sheets* ([82-625-X](#)), is now available from the *Browse by key resource* module of our website under *Publications*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca).