

Cancer incidence in Canada, 2016

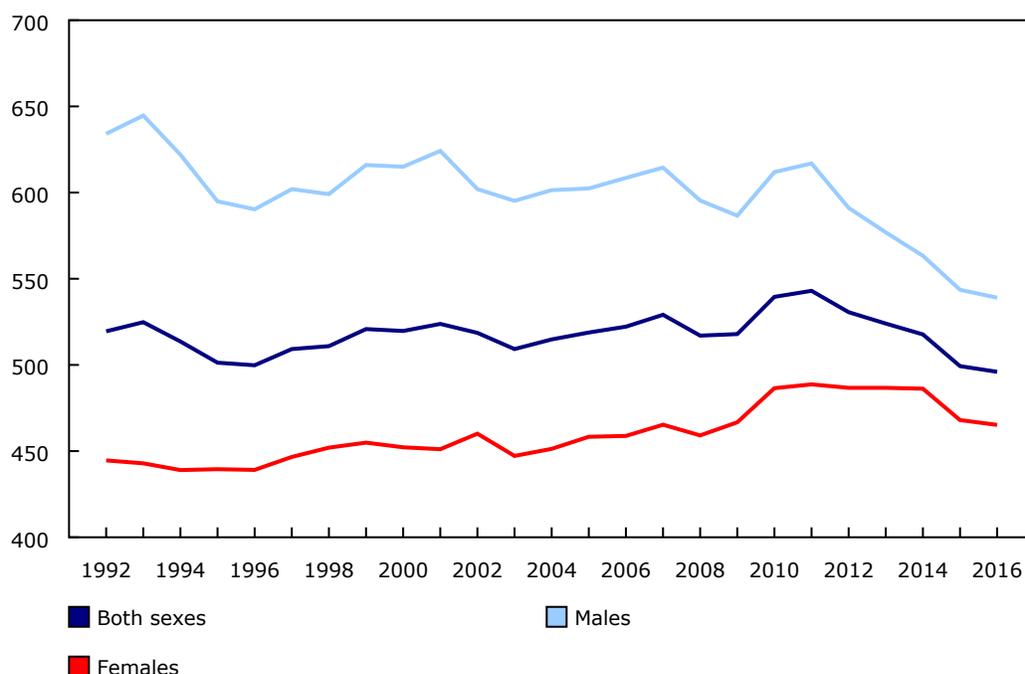
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In 2016, over 146,000 new cases of cancer were diagnosed in Canada, excluding Quebec (see note to readers). This represents an incidence rate of approximately 523 cases per 100,000 people. Since the inception of the Canadian Cancer Registry (CCR) in 1992, the annual number of diagnosed cancer cases has increased from one year to the next as the population ages and grows.

However, when the cancer incidence rate is adjusted to control for changes in the age structure of the population over time, the risk of being diagnosed with cancer appears to have decreased since 2011 (Chart 1). This decline is somewhat sharper among males than females, mostly owing to a decrease in the number of new cases of prostate cancer.

Chart 1
Age-standardized cancer incidence rate for all cancers combined, by sex and diagnosis year, Canada (excluding Quebec), 1992 to 2016

age-standardized incidence rate per 100,000 people



Source(s): Canadian Cancer Registry (3207).

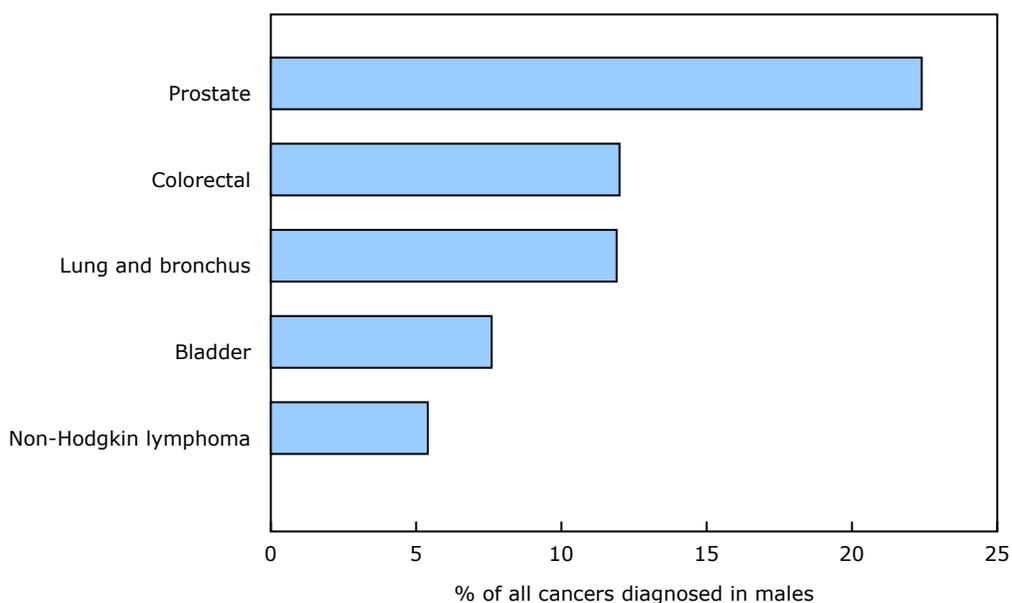
Most common cancers by sex

In 2016, the five most commonly diagnosed cancers for both sexes combined were breast, lung and bronchus, prostate, colorectal and bladder. Together, these five cancers accounted for more than half of all new cancer cases (53.0%).

Among males, prostate cancer was the most common diagnosis (22.4% of new cases among males), followed by colorectal (12.0%), lung and bronchus (11.9%), bladder (7.6%) and non-Hodgkin lymphoma (5.4%).



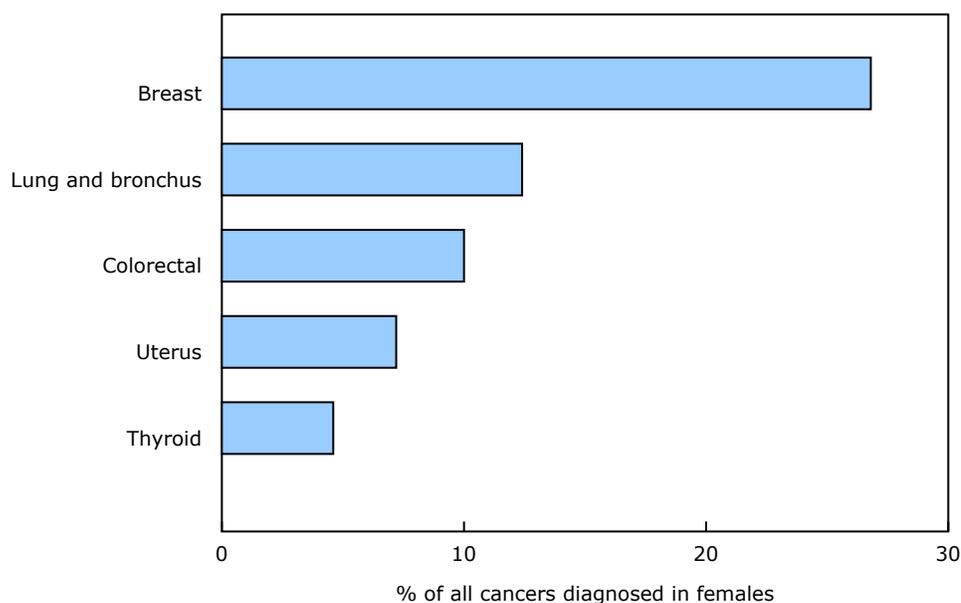
Chart 2
Five most commonly diagnosed cancers among males, Canada (excluding Quebec), 2016



Source(s): Canadian Cancer Registry (3207).

Among females, breast cancer was most frequently diagnosed (26.8% of new cases among females), followed by lung and bronchus (12.4%), colorectal (10.0%), uterine (7.2%) and thyroid (4.6%).

Chart 3
Five most commonly diagnosed cancers among females, Canada (excluding Quebec), 2016



Source(s): Canadian Cancer Registry (3207).

In general, for all cancers combined, males are more often diagnosed with cancer than females. In 2016, there were 74,880 new cases of cancer diagnosed in males and 71,415 diagnosed in females. Some specific types of cancer are also more commonly diagnosed among males. For instance, approximately three in four new cases of bladder (75.6%), liver (77.5%) and esophageal (77.4%) cancer were diagnosed in males. However, close to three-quarters of cases of thyroid cancer were diagnosed in females (73.6% of all new cases).

Cancer by age

Cancer is more often diagnosed among the older population. Among all new cancer cases reported in 2016, 71.1% were diagnosed in people aged 60 and older, while people aged 30 to 59 accounted for 26.9% of new cancer cases. Those under 30 years of age accounted for 2.0% of all cancer cases diagnosed in 2016.

The age at which cancer is typically diagnosed varies by cancer type (Table 1). In 2016, the most frequently diagnosed cancer among males under 30 was testicular cancer (18.2% of all new cases in this age group). Prostate cancer was the most commonly diagnosed cancer after the age of 30, accounting for 17.2% of new cancer cases in males aged 30 to 59, and 24.4% of new cases in males aged 60 and older.

Among females, the most commonly diagnosed cancer before the age of 30 was thyroid (22.1% of all new cancer cases in this age group). Breast cancer was the most common after the age of 30, accounting for 34.4% of new cases in women aged 30 to 59, and 23.9% of new cases in those aged 60 and older.

Table 1
Rank, number of new cancer cases and percentage of all cases, top five cancers¹ by age group and sex, Canada (excluding Quebec), 2016

	rank	number	% of all cancer cases
0 to 29 years old			
Both sexes			
All cancers	...	2,945	100.0
Thyroid	1	400	13.6
Testis	2	265	9.0
Hodgkin lymphoma	3	265	9.0
Acute lymphocytic leukemia	4	230	7.8
Non-Hodgkin lymphoma	5	220	7.5
Males			
All cancers	...	1,460	100.0
Testis	1	265	18.2
Acute lymphocytic leukemia	2	145	9.9
Non-Hodgkin lymphoma	3	140	9.6
Hodgkin lymphoma	4	130	8.9
Brain	5	130	8.9
Females			
All cancers	...	1,490	100.0
Thyroid	1	330	22.1
Hodgkin lymphoma	2	125	8.4
Acute lymphocytic leukemia	3	95	6.4
Non-Hodgkin lymphoma	4	95	6.4
Brain	5	90	6.0
30 to 59 years old			
Both sexes			
All cancers	...	39,260	100.0
Breast	1	7,880	20.1
Colorectal	2	3,830	9.8
Prostate	3	2,835	7.2
Thyroid	4	2,695	6.9
Lung and bronchus	5	2,635	6.7
Males			
All cancers	...	16,480	100.0
Prostate	1	2,835	17.2
Colorectal	2	2,210	13.4
Lung and bronchus	3	1,210	7.3
Non-Hodgkin lymphoma	4	1,075	6.5
Melanoma of the skin	5	935	5.7
Females			
All cancers	...	22,785	100.0
Breast	1	7,845	34.4
Thyroid	2	2,070	9.1
Uterus	3	1,810	7.9
Colorectal	4	1,600	7.0
Lung and bronchus	5	1,425	6.3
60 years old and older			
Both sexes			
All cancers	...	104,045	100.0
Lung and bronchus	1	15,105	14.5
Prostate	2	13,910	13.4
Colorectal	3	12,220	11.7
Breast	4	11,385	10.9
Bladder ²	5	6,490	6.2

Table 1 - continued

Rank, number of new cancer cases and percentage of all cases, top five cancers¹ by age group and sex, Canada (excluding Quebec), 2016

	rank	number	% of all cancer cases
Males			
All cancers	...	56,930	100.0
Prostate	1	13,910	24.4
Lung and bronchus	2	7,670	13.5
Colorectal	3	6,730	11.8
Bladder ²	4	4,930	8.7
Non-Hodgkin lymphoma	5	2,835	5.0
Females			
All cancers	...	47,130	100.0
Breast	1	11,245	23.9
Lung and bronchus	2	7,425	15.8
Colorectal	3	5,470	11.6
Uterus	4	3,325	7.1
Non-Hodgkin lymphoma	5	2,295	4.9

... not applicable

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

2. Includes in situ cases.

Note(s): Cancer case counts in this table have been randomly rounded to a lower or higher multiple of five to prevent inappropriate data disclosure. Consequently, rows and columns may not add up as expected.

Source(s): Canadian Cancer Registry (3207).

Note to readers

The Canadian Cancer Registry (CCR) is a population based registry that includes data collected and reported to Statistics Canada by each Provincial/Territorial Cancer Registry. The goal of the person-based CCR is to collect information about each new primary cancer diagnosed among Canadian residents since 1992. For more information, consult the [CCR webpage](#).

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

Cancer incidence data for Quebec are not available for diagnosis years 2011 and onward. For tables 13-10-0111-01 and 13-10-0747-01, cancer incidence estimates for Canada excluding Quebec were produced for all diagnosis years.

As the CCR is updated annually with new records and changes to previous records, the incidence for any given diagnosis year may change from one release to the next. In particular, delays in the reporting of new cases to Statistics Canada typically result in undercounts of cases which are more pronounced in the most recently reported diagnosis year. Generally, the reporting delay ranges from 2% to 3% nationally. In addition, death certificate only cases were not reported by Ontario for data years 2015 and 2016, and for Manitoba since 2013. This would amount to about an additional 1,400 cases for 2016 that are not reflected herein, but that will eventually be reported to the CCR.

Cancer incidence rates are age-standardized using the direct method and the final 2011 Canadian postcensal population structure. Age-standardization allows for comparisons of incidence rates over time that are unaffected by changes in the age distribution of the population (see page on [Age-standardized rates](#)).

Available tables: [13-10-0111-01](#) and [13-10-0747-01](#).

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

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).