

Statistics on Cancer Incidence 2018

In 2018, about 68,000 malignant tumours for just over 63,000 persons were reported to the Cancer Registry. The number of people who receive a cancer diagnosis is considerably higher than the number of deaths in cancer. The most common age for developing cancer is just over 70 years. For women, breast cancer is the most common type of cancer, and for men this is prostate cancer.

Risk of cancer increases with age

The risk of getting cancer increases with age. However, the greatest number of people who are diagnosed with cancer are between the ages of 70 and 74. The reason for this pattern is that the number of people in each age class decreases fairly quickly after 70 years, given the population's age structure of today. Most deaths with cancer as the underlying cause of death occur between the ages of 70 and 85. Figure 1 shows the number of diagnosed and the number of deaths in 1-year classes, for women and men respectively. Cancer incidence and mortality are higher among young women than among young men. The difference between the sexes, before the age of 50, is mainly due to the fact that breast cancer and gynaecological cancer diseases also occur at younger ages.

Figure 1. Cancer Incidence and Mortality by age

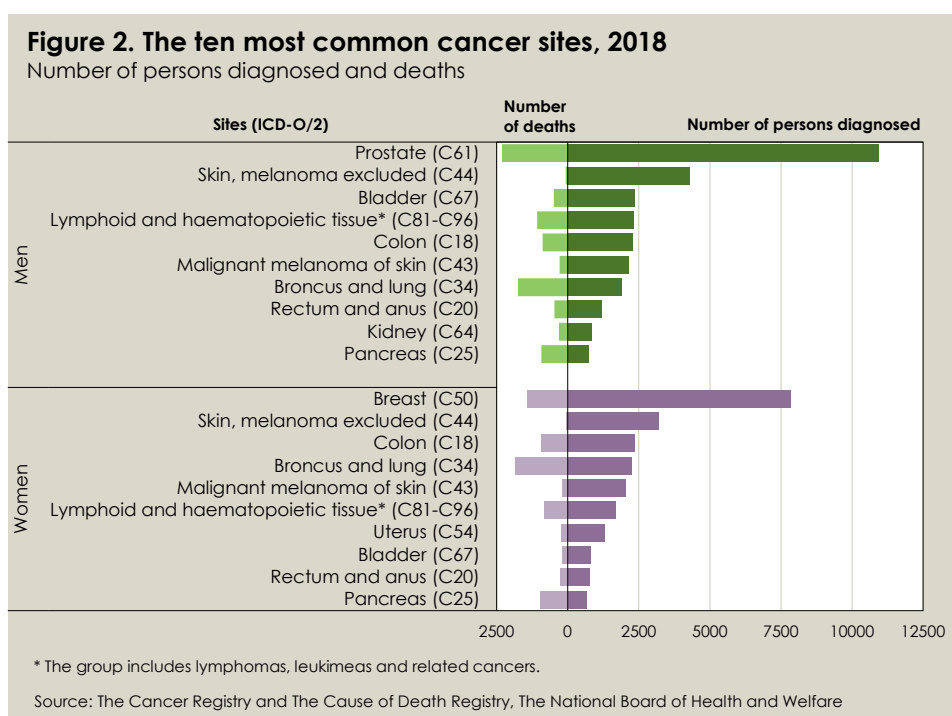
Number of persons diagnosed and number of deaths, 5-year averages, 1-year classes



Source: The Cancer Registry and The Cause of Death Registry, The National Board of Health and Welfare

The most common types of cancer

Figure 2 shows the number of people diagnosed with cancer during 2018 for the 10 most common types of cancer, as well as the number of deaths with the cancer type as the underlying cause of death. Breast cancer is the most common cancer among women. In 2018, over 7,800 women were diagnosed with breast cancer and 1,400 women died with breast cancer as the underlying cause of death. Prostate cancer is the most common cancer among men. About 10,900 men were diagnosed with prostate cancer and over 2,300 men died with a prostate cancer cause of death. Lung cancer was the largest cause of cancer death among women, with over 1 800 deaths in 2018. About the same number of men died from lung cancer. Note that the persons who died from cancer in a certain year could have had their cancer diagnosed several years earlier. Comparing the incidence for one year with the mortality for the same year still gives a general idea of mortality in relation to the incidence of various types of cancer.



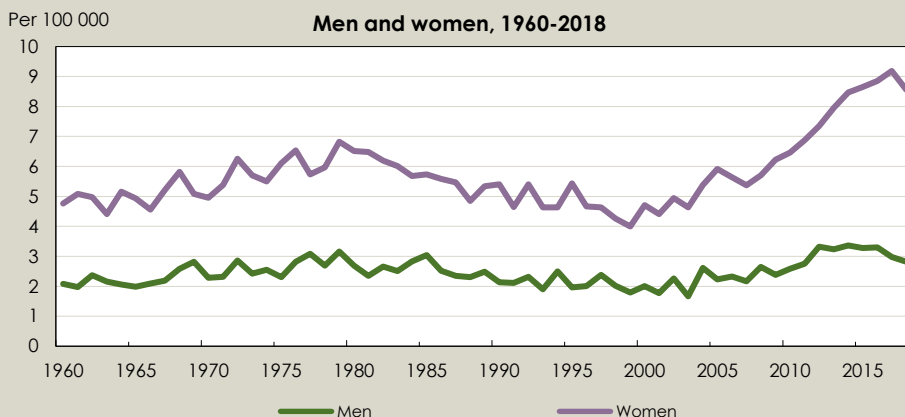
Thyroid and testicular cancer increase

Two cancers that increase without known explanation are thyroid cancer and testicular cancer. The increase in thyroid cancer was also noted in the 2016 fact sheet. Figure 3 shows individuals per 100,000 inhabitants, age-standardised, who have been diagnosed with thyroid cancer 1960–2018. Note that the incidence for the last year in the series has been underestimated due to the delay in reporting to the register and that the incidence during the 1970s and 1980s is higher due to a larger proportion of autopsy-detected tumours. From the beginning of the

2000s to the year 2018, the incidence increased, for women from about 5 to 9 cases per 100,000.

Figure 3. Thyroid cancer

Number of persons diagnosed per 100 000 inhabitants, age-standardised

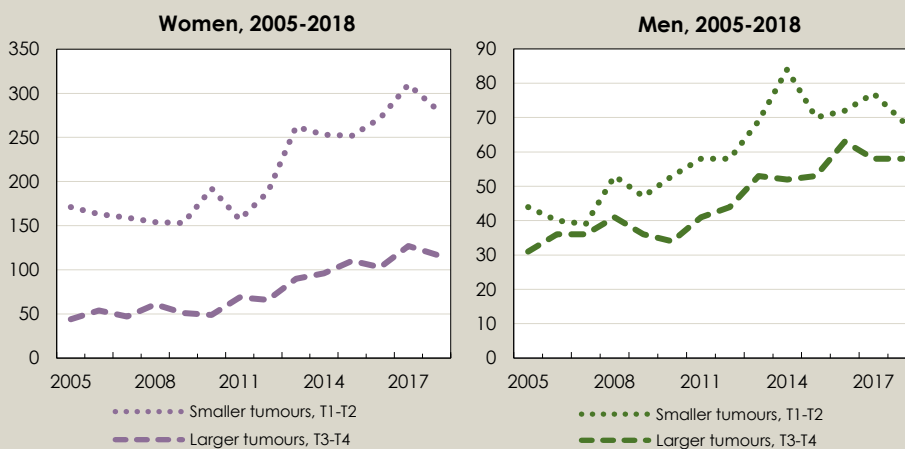


Source: The Cancer Registry, The National Board of Health and Welfare

If the increase was the result of an increased diagnostic activity, the proportion of small and difficult-to-detect tumours should increase during the period. Since 2004, the cancer registry has been registering tumour size (T), which describes the size of the tumour and the extent to which it grows into surrounding tissues. Figure 4 shows the development of thyroid cancer 2005–2018, distributed on tumours less than 4 cm (T1–T2) and larger than 4 cm or with growth in to surrounding tissue (T3–T4). The charts show that both smaller and larger tumours are increasing. At the same time, the percentage distribution between larger and smaller tumours remains largely unchanged during the period.

Figure 4. Thyroid cancer by tumour size

Number of persons diagnosed*



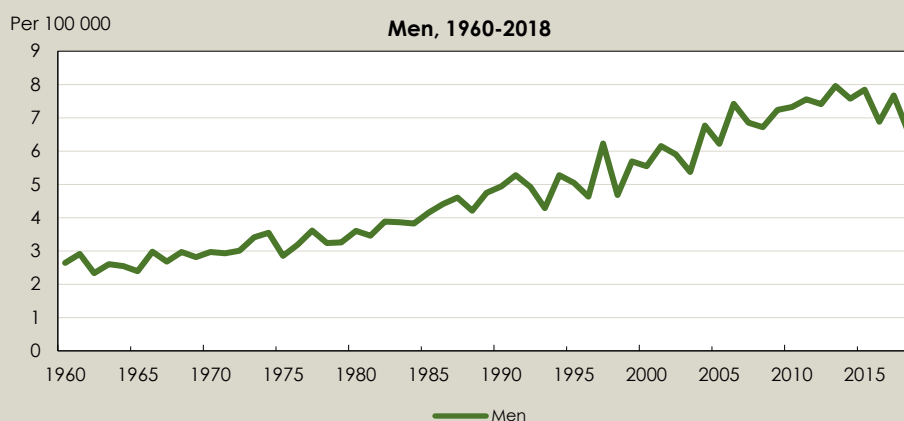
* Note that the scales of the vertical axes of the diagrams are different.

Source: The Cancer Registry, The National Board of Health and Welfare

The incidence of testicular cancer has increased since tumour diseases began to be systematically registered in the cancer registry in the late 1950s. It is about three times more common to have testicular cancer today than in the 1960s, see Figure 5. This development is similar in the other Nordic countries.

Figure 5. Testicular cancer

Number of persons diagnosed per 100 000 inhabitants, age-standardised



Source: The Cancer Registry, The National Board of Health and Welfare

Testicular cancer mainly affects young men. The most common age is 30-34 years. About 85 percent of the 350 men affected in 2018 were 55 years or younger. The relative survival following a testicular cancer diagnosis has greatly improved in recent decades. Today, the five-year survival rate is more than 95 percent.

More information

You can find more tables, graphs and information here:

www.socialstyrelsen.se/statistik-och-data/statistik/statistikamnen/cancer
(in Swedish, but with English list of terms).

If you want to use our statistical database:

www.socialstyrelsen.se/en/statistics-and-data/statistics/statistical-data-bases/

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