

All Cancers

Facts About Cancer in the U.S.

According to the 1998 American Cancer Society, *Cancer Facts & Figures*, an estimated 1,228,600 people in the U.S. were diagnosed with cancer and the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) reports that 541,519 people died from some form of this disease. Cancer varies by climate and region. In the U.S., cancer is diagnosed more often in the Northeast and areas of the South. Cancer is more common in men than in women. One in every two men and one in every three women will be diagnosed with cancer in his or her lifetime. Cancer is more common with increasing age.

The key to preventing death from cancer is to find it early when it can be cured.

Risk Factors for Cancer

The Harvard Report on Cancer Prevention in 1996 researched the risk factors for cancer. The estimated percent of total cancer deaths attributed to established causes of cancer were:

Risk Factor	Percentage
Tobacco	30%
Adult diet/obesity	30%
Sedentary lifestyle	5%
Occupational factors	5%
Family history of cancer	5%
Viruses/biological agents	5%
Perinatal factors/growth	5%
Reproductive factors	3%
Alcohol	3%
Socioeconomic status	3%
Environmental pollution	2%
Ionizing/UV radiation	2%
Other	2%

Prevention

The most successful way to prevent cancer is to **limit the number of modifiable risk factors** by following these guidelines:

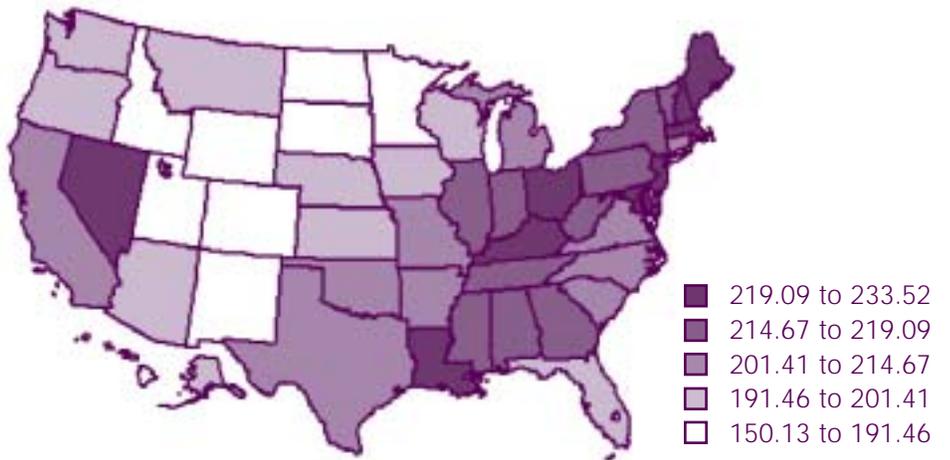
- **Do not smoke**
- **Eat a diet high in fresh fruits and vegetables and low in fats**
- **Get some exercise every day**
- **Limit alcohol intake**

Early Detection

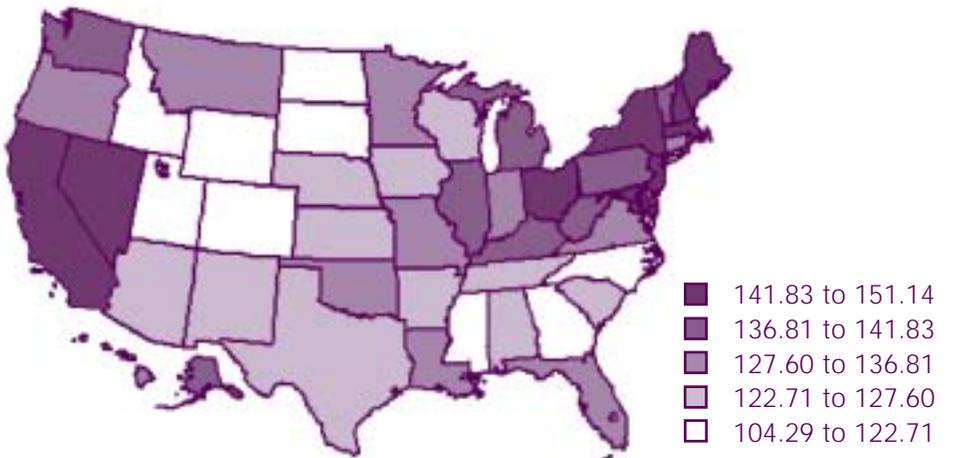
Recommended screening tests are listed here and discussed in more detail in the following chapters:

- **Mammogram**
- **Pap Smear**
- **Colorectal Exam**
- **Mouth and Throat Exam**
- **Skin Cancer Screening**
- **Prostate Screening**

Age-Adjusted Mortality Rates for All Cancers, White Males, 1970-1994



Age-Adjusted Mortality Rates for All Cancers, White Females, 1970-1994



Note: Mortality rate/100,000 age-adjusted to 1970 U.S. population
Source: Atlas of Cancer Mortality in the U.S.

Facts about Cancer in Maine

- In 1997 and 1998, cancer was the second leading cause of death after heart disease and accounted for almost 25% of all deaths in Maine.
- Cancer was the number one cause of potential years of life lost, accounting for 1,543 years per 100,000 people in Maine. Heart disease only accounted for 950 years of potential life lost. This measure indicates that cancer deaths occur in people at a much younger age than heart disease.

Risk Factors in Maine

The 2000 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) shows that:

- Over 23% of Maine adults smoke cigarettes.
- Over 75% of Maine residents do not eat the recommended five or more servings of fruits and vegetables a day.
- Over 27% of Maine residents indicate that they have not participated in any physical activity in the past month. This may contribute to obesity.

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Within Maine, there is a lot of random variation between the county rates. Counties whose rates for all cancers combined are significantly lower than the rate in Maine include Cumberland and York. The incidence rate in Androscoggin County was significantly higher than the Maine rate. (See Incidence Rates, page 43, for 95% confidence intervals.)

Maine = 399.7
 National (SEER¹ Whites) = 401.4

¹ Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results

Early Detection in Maine

The 2000 BRFS shows the following patterns of early detection in Maine:

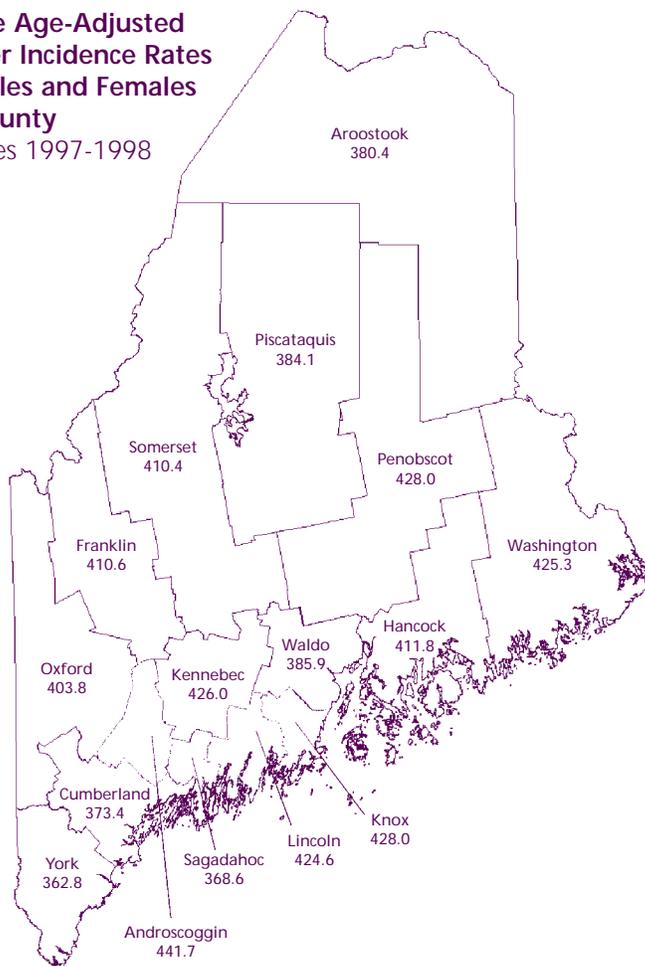
- **Breast Cancer:** Approximately 90% of the women in Maine, over age 40, have ever had a mammogram. However, only 75% of these women have had the mammogram within the screening guideline of one year.
- **Cervical Cancer:** Ninety-four percent of Maine women have ever had a Pap Smear. Of these women, 73% have had the Pap smear within the recommended timeframe of one year.
- **Colon Cancer:** The 1999 BRFS shows that only 36% of men and women in Maine, over age 50, have had a fecal occult blood test (FOBT). Only 34% of Maine men and women, over age 50, have had either a sigmoidoscopy or colonoscopy.

Burden of Cancer in Maine

- In 1997 and 1998 an average of 3,348 men and 3,178 women were diagnosed with some form of cancer.
- 1,514 men and 1,426 women died of cancer each year.
- Over 71% of new cancers in Maine were diagnosed in people over 60 years old.

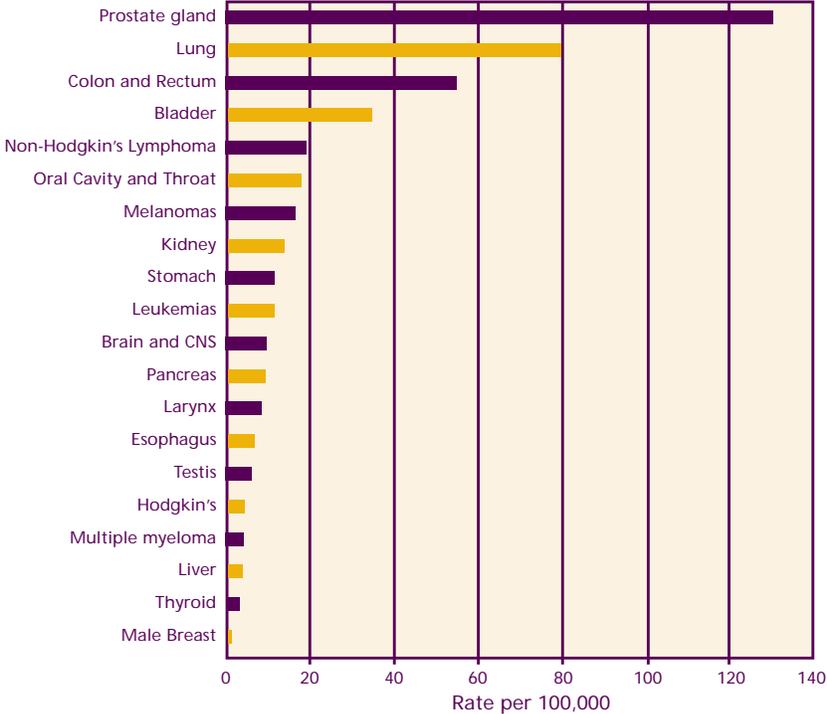
Maine Age-Adjusted Cancer Incidence Rates in Males and Females by County

All Sites 1997-1998



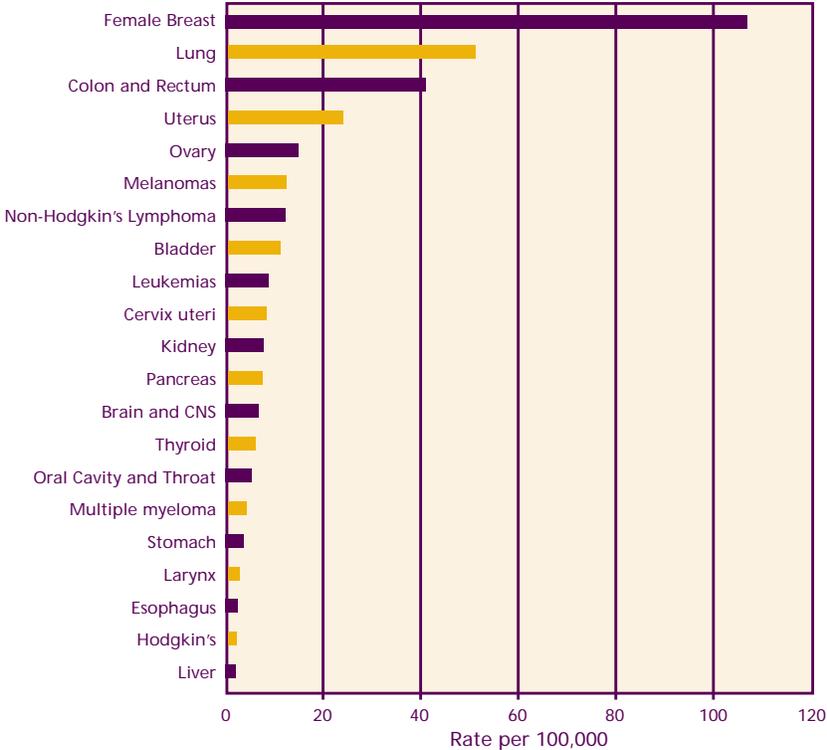
Prostate cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in Maine males, followed by lung, colorectal, and bladder cancer. These four types of cancer account for 65% of all newly diagnosed cancers in males for 1997 and 1998.

Distribution of Age-Adjusted Incidence Rates in Maine by Site
Males, 1997-1998



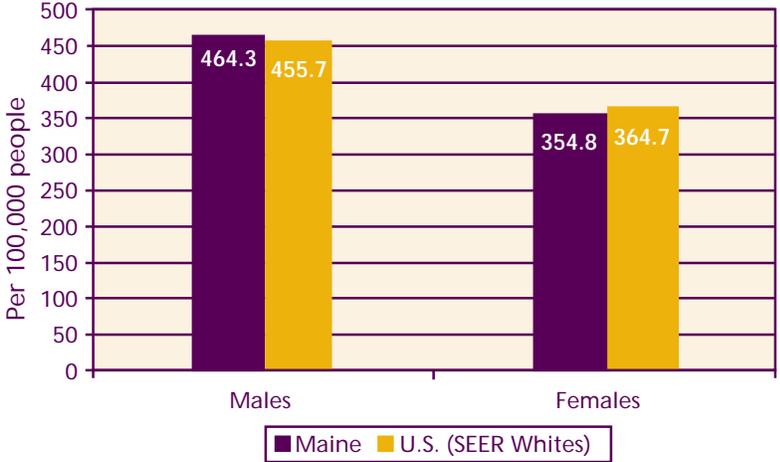
Breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in Maine females, followed by lung, colorectal, and uterine cancer. These four types of cancer account for almost two-thirds (63%) of all cancers diagnosed in females for 1997 and 1998.

Distribution of Age-Adjusted Incidence Rates in Maine by Site
Females, 1997-1998



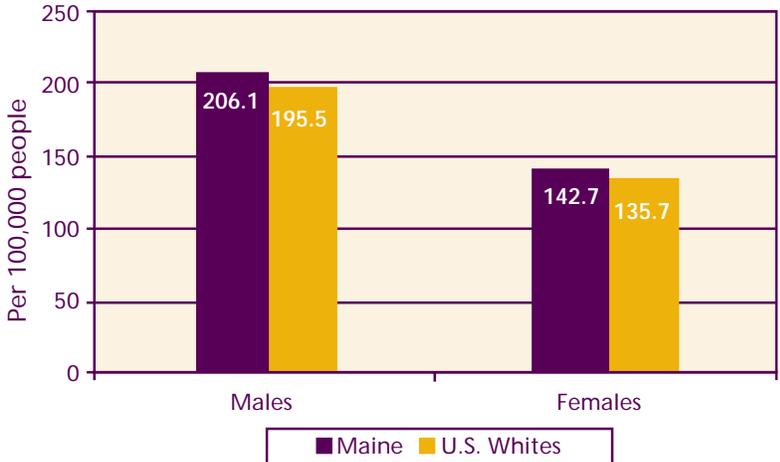
The age-adjusted incidence rate for all types of cancer combined in Maine men was not statistically different from the U.S. The all cancer incidence rate in Maine women was significantly lower than the U.S.

Age-Adjusted Incidence Rates by Sex, Maine and U.S. All Cancers, 1997-1998



There were more deaths due to all cancers in Maine men and women than in the U.S. This difference was statistically significant. The difference may be due to a number of factors, including a lack of access to cancer screenings and delayed diagnosis or access to appropriate treatment.

Age-Adjusted Mortality Rates by Sex, Maine and U.S. All Cancers, 1997-1998



Note: Rates are age-adjusted to the 1970 U.S. standard population

Cancer is more common as people get older. For each age group over 60, the cancer rates are much higher for men than for women.

Maine Age-Specific Incidence Rates All Cancers, 1997-1998

