



Fact Sheet

Cancer

Healthy San Mateo 2010: Health Status Indicators for San Mateo County, California

Cancer is a term used for a disease in which cells in the body divide abnormally. Because their growth goes unchecked, cancer cells can invade surrounding tissues and spread through the blood and lymph system to other parts of the body. Specific cancers refer to the type of cells from which the abnormal cells originated. When these cells have migrated to other regions in the body, the cancer is called disseminated or metastasized.

Morbidity

- The overall incidence rate for all types of cancer remained fairly stable from 1990 to 2000.
- In San Mateo County, the average cancer incidence rate from 1996-2000 was 515.8 (508.3, 523.4)
- The incidence rate of all types of cancer in males decreased significantly by 10.5% from 606.1 (575.2, 638.4) in 1990 to 542.4 (516.5, 569.1) in 2000
- The rate of cancer has remained consistently higher in males than in females.
- The incidence of cancer has consistently been significantly lower among Asians compared to other race/ethnicities.
- The incidence rate of cancer remained stable for all race/ethnicities except among Blacks where the incidence rate decreased significantly by 33.2% from 647.7 (540.0, 776.6) in 1990 to 432.6 (355.1, 516.9) in 2000.
- The incidence of all cancers in the Black male population significantly decreased by 35.9% from 858.2 (644.7, 1159.2) in 1990 to 550.0 (416.4, 697.6) in 2000. There were no significant decreases or increases in incidence among the other race/ethnicities during this time in San Mateo County.
- From 1996-2000, the lowest rates of female cancer were in Asian females at 319.8 (300.7, 339.7) and the highest rates were in White females at 560.8 (547.6, 574.3).
- From 1990-2000 the four most prevalent cancers with the highest incidence rates overall by race/ethnicity were breast (invasive), prostate, colon/rectum, and lung.
- Breast cancer was the most common type of cancer and had the highest incidence rate. From 1996-2000 the breast cancer incidence rate was 187.5 (181.4, 193.7) among females only.
- The overall rate of female breast cancer increased significantly by 22.6% from 160.5 (147.1, 174.7) in 1990 to 196.8 (183.0, 210.9) in 2000. Incidence rates were lowest in Asian, Hispanic, and Black females.
- Prostate cancer was the second most prevalent and the incidence rate among males remained stable in the past decade, averaging 159.6 (153.2, 166.2) from 1996-2000.
- Cumulative prostate cancer rates for 1996-2000 were significantly different between all race/ethnicities, with the highest rates (259.9) reported in Blacks (218.8, 306.1) and lowest rates (97.7) occurring in Asians (84.9, 111.6).
- Colorectal and lung cancers had similar prevalence, accounting for approximately 11% of cancers during 1996-2000.
- Total colorectal cancer incidence rates were relatively stable in San Mateo County for both males and females.
- The colorectal cancer rate in males was significantly higher than in females (Incidence Rate Ratio (IRR)=1.4). The highest rates of colorectal cancer in both males and females were in Blacks 69.7 (55.5, 86.1) and Whites 62.8 (59.7, 66.1), while the lowest rates occurred in the Asian population 40.3 (34.8, 46.5) from 1996-2000.

- The overall incidence rate of lung cancer for 1996-2000 was 58.7 (56.1, 61.3) and the rate in males was significantly higher than in females (IRR=1.4). The highest lung cancer rate in both sexes was in the Black population [76.6 (61.9, 93.8)], and a similar rate was observed in Whites [65.2 (62.0, 68.5)]. Asians [39.6 (34.3, 45.4)] and Hispanics [42.7 (35.5, 50.7)] had significantly lower rates of lung cancer during this time.

Mortality

In the United States, cancer is a significant health burden and is the second leading cause of death, accounting for 22.9% of all deaths nationwide and 23.2% of all deaths in California¹. Nationally, overall incidence rates have stabilized from 1995 through 1999, while cancer mortality rates have decreased. Despite these trends, the actual burden of cancer on the nation's health may increase due to the overall growth of and aging of the population.

- Overall cancer mortality rates in San Mateo County declined slightly (though not significantly) from 1990-2001 and remain higher than the Healthy People 2010 objective of 159.9 deaths annually.
- The overall cancer mortality rate in San Mateo County from 1999-2001 was 177.4.
- In San Mateo County cancer mortality rates in males averaged 1.4 times higher than in females.
- A significant decline of 14.4% in mortality rates was observed for females from 182.9 (170.0, 198.8) in 1990 to 143.0 (131.5, 154.8) in 2001.
- From 1997-2001, the average annual mortality rate was 1.2 times greater in Blacks (237.0) than in Whites (197.8), and almost twice as high compared to Asians (119.6) and Hispanics (128.6).
- The largest cause of cancer death from 1990-2001 was lung cancer, with an annual average number of 318 deaths during this time. The cumulative mortality rate from 1997-2001 due to lung cancer was 46.0 (43.7, 48.3).
- The second largest cause of cancer death was colorectal cancer, with a cumulative mortality rate of 18.7 (17.3, 20.2) during the same period.
- Breast cancer cumulative mortality was 14.6 (13.3, 15.9) and prostate cancer cumulative mortality was 10.7 (9.7, 11.9) in the overall population.
- The mortality rate of lung cancer in males was significantly higher than for females, at 56.8 (52.9, 60.8) compared to 38.5 (35.8, 41.3).
- Prostate cancer mortality in males and breast cancer mortality in females were similar.
- Although the number of colorectal cancer deaths were similar in males and females, the mortality rate was 1.4 times higher in males [22.5 (20.2, 25.2)] than in females [16.0 (14.4, 17.9)].
- Lung cancer was the first ranked cause of cancer death for all race/ethnicities. Colorectal cancer and breast cancer ranked in the top four causes of cancer death for all racial/ethnic groups.
- In the Asian population, liver cancer and pancreatic cancer were more common causes of cancer death than prostate cancer.
- Prostate cancer deaths ranked second for Black, Hispanic, and White males, but fourth among Asian males.
- Although breast cancer was the leading cause of cancer death in Asian and Hispanic women, the breast cancer mortality rates from 1997-2001 were lower than in Black and White women.
- From 1997-2001, the average county mortality rate due to female breast cancer was 25 with the highest average rates in White females (28.8) and Black females (30.6).
- In San Mateo County, the mortality rate due to prostate cancer in males has not declined remarkably in the previous decade. From 1997-2001, the average overall mortality rate was 28.4, which met the Healthy People 2010 target of 28.8 deaths.

- Overall, colorectal cancer mortality rates declined significantly from 26.3 (22.2, 30.8) in 1990 to 17.8 (14.9, 21.1) in 2001. From 1997-2001, the average mortality rate was 18.7, which is higher than the Healthy People 2010 target of 13.9 deaths.
- From 1997-2001, males had a 1.4 times greater colorectal cancer mortality rates than females.
- White males have consistently had the highest colorectal cancer mortality rates in comparison with males of other race/ethnicities in San Mateo County.
- Black females have consistently had the highest colorectal cancer mortality rates in comparison with females of other race/ethnicities in San Mateo County.
- Overall, lung cancer mortality remained fairly stable from 1990-2001. From the five-year period 1997-2001, the average mortality rate was 45.6, slightly higher than the Healthy People 2010 target of 44.9 deaths.
- The highest rates have consistently been in the White and Black populations, which were not statistically significantly different from each other, and higher than the Health People 2010 target.
- Lung cancer mortality rates for males of all race/ethnicities were significantly higher than for females of the same racial/ethnic groups.

Five Most Common Causes Of Cancer Death By Sex

Cumulative Data, San Mateo County, 1997-2001

Rank	Both Sexes n (% of all cases) Rate (95% CI)	Males n (% of male cases) Rate (95% CI)	Females n (% of female cases) Rate (95% CI)
1	Lung 1596 (25.3%) 46.0 (43.7, 48.3)	Lung 827 (26.4%) 56.8 (52.9, 60.8)	Lung 769 (24.1%) 38.5 (35.8, 41.3)
2	Colorectal 658 (10.4%) 18.7 (17.3, 20.2)	Prostate 375 (12.0%) 28.3 (25.5, 31.4)	Breast 509 (16.0%) 25.7 (23.5, 28.1)
3	Breast 516 (8.2%) 14.6 (13.3, 15.9)	Colorectal 328 (10.5%) 22.5 (20.2, 25.2)	Colorectal 330 (10.3%) 16.0 (14.4, 17.9)
4	Prostate 375 (5.9%) 10.7 (9.7, 11.9)	Pancreatic 165 (5.3%) 11.4 (9.7, 13.3)	Pancreatic 204 (6.4%) 9.9 (8.6, 11.4)
5	Pancreatic 369 (5.8%) 10.6 (9.5, 11.7)	Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma 155 (5.0%) 10.6 (9.0, 12.4)	Ovarian 180 (5.6%) 9.1 (7.8, 10.6)
Total (All Deaths)	6319	3128	3191

Rates are age-adjusted, standardized to Year 2000 population, and are cumulative for the five-year period 1997-2001; 1997-1998 numbers and rates have been adjusted to relevant comparability ratios; per 100,000 population
Source Data: California Department of Health Services, Center for Health Statistics, Death Records 1990-2001

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Notes: Unless otherwise noted, rates refer to the incidence of disease per 100,000 population.

Data Sources: Northern California Cancer Center Registry, 1990-2000. 1990 and 2000 Census data are actual counts, whereas intervening and subsequent years are estimates.

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