

## Two Out of Three People With Cancer Living for 5 Years or More

Zosia Chustecka | March 13, 2015

Two out of three people diagnosed with invasive cancer in the United States are living for 5 years or longer, notes the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The best survival rates are seen in the most commonly diagnosed cancers — with 97% of prostate cancer patients surviving for 5 years or longer, followed by breast cancer patients (88% survival at 5 years) and colorectal cancer patients (63% survival at 5 years).

However, the outlook is less favorable for another of the most commonly diagnosed cancers – only 18% of patients with lung cancer are still alive after 5 years.

This is the first time that the CDC has reported cancer survivor data, but it will now do so annually, the agency said in a statement. The results are [published](#) in the March 13 issue of *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

The findings come from an analysis of data in the CDC's National Program of Cancer Registries. The authors reviewed the most recent data, from 2011, on cases of invasive cancers (defined as cancer that has spread to surrounding normal tissue from where it began, with the exception of bladder cancer).

The report also includes data on cancer incidence; the most common cancer sites continue to be the following:

- Prostate cancer (128 cases per 100,000 men)
- Breast cancer (122 cases per 100,000 women)
- Lung and bronchus cancer (61 cases per 100,000 persons)
- Colorectal cancer (40 cases per 100,000 persons)

These four sites accounted for half of the cancers diagnosed in 2011, the researchers note.

Disparities in cancer incidence still persist, the authors state, with greater rates among men than women and the highest rates among blacks. Additionally, 5-year relative survival after any cancer diagnosis was lower for blacks (60%) than for whites (65%).

Data by state show that there are geographical differences in cancer incidence, with a range from 374 cases per 100,000 persons in New Mexico to 509 cases per 100,000 persons in the District of Columbia.

"These data are an important reminder that a key to surviving with cancer is making sure everyone has access to care from early diagnosis to treatment," said Lisa Richardson, MD, director of the CDC's Division of Cancer Prevention and Control, in a statement. "We know, for example, that early detection of colorectal cancer has had the largest impact on long-term survival rates."

In the article, the CDC researchers, led by Jane Henley, MSPH, say that these data are being used by states to effectively develop comprehensive cancer control programs.

For example, in Vermont, cancer registry data were used to identify two counties with a high incidence of melanoma, which led to pilots of a new program for cancer prevention, they note.

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