

BASIC FACTS ABOUT CANCER IN PENNSYLVANIA

What is Cancer?

- Group of diseases related to the uncontrolled growth and spread of abnormal cells.
- Death can occur if growth of abnormal cells spreads.
- If detected early and treated promptly, many cancers can be cured.

What Causes Cancer?

- Environmental factors include chemicals, radiation, viruses, and lifestyle (tobacco use, diet, alcohol consumption).
- Internal factors include hormones, immune status, and inherited conditions.

How is Cancer Prevented?

- Primary prevention includes avoiding oncogenic exposures (tobacco, sun exposure, excess dietary fat).
- Secondary prevention includes early detection and treatment of benign precursor lesions.

How is Cancer Treated?

- Surgery, radiation, chemotherapy, hormones, and immunotherapy.

Who Gets Cancer?

- Cancer strikes all segments of the state's population.
- Occurrence of cancer rises with age and exposure to risk factors.

What Are the Most Common Cancers?

- Female Breast
- Trachea, Bronchus, Lung and Pleura
- Prostate
- Colon
- Urinary Bladder

How Many New Cancer Cases and Deaths Will There Be This Year?

- About 72,580 Pennsylvanians are projected to be diagnosed with cancer in 2000.
- 70,612 Pennsylvania residents were diagnosed with cancer in 1997.
- About 29,765 Pennsylvanians are projected to die from cancer in 2000.
- 29,721 Pennsylvania residents died as a result of cancer in 1998.

Why Are the Number of Cancer Cases Increasing in Pennsylvania?

- Larger percentage of early stage detection.
- Aging population.
- Better awareness of symptoms/signs.

Are Cancer Death Rates Declining in Pennsylvania?

- Declining trend for total cancer deaths since 1993.
- Generally declining trend for male cancer deaths since 1990.
- Declining trend for female cancer deaths since 1993.

What Is a Cancer Cluster?

- Larger than expected number of cancer cases during a limited time period in a specific geographic area.

How Are Cancer Clusters Investigated?

- By examining data from cancer registries.
- By comparing the observed number of cancers in a specific geographic area to the expected number.

Where Can Additional Information on Cancer Be Obtained?

- National statistics and information
 - National Cancer Institute Cancer Information Service (800) 4-CANCER (422-6237)
 - American Cancer Society (800) 227-2345
 - Cancer Care, Inc. (800) 813-HOPE (813-4673)
 - Y-ME National Organization for Breast Cancer Information Support Program (800) 221-2141
 - CDC, Office on Smoking and Health (800) 232-1311 or (404) 488-5705
 - Prostate Cancer:
 - US TOO International (800) 808-7866
 - CaPCURE (800) 757-2873
 - National Prostate Cancer Coalition (813) 253-0541
 - Skin Cancer:
 - American Academy of Dermatology (708) 330-0230
 - Skin Cancer Foundation (800) SKIN-490 (754-6490)
 - National Ovarian Cancer Coalition (888) 682-7426
- State and local statistics and information
 - Pennsylvania Department of Health Health Statistics (717) 783-2548 Cancer Control Program (717) 787-5251
 - Your local American Cancer Society
 - Your local Department of Health
 - Your local American Lung Association