

CANCER IN AUSTRALIA¹

- An estimated 144,713 new cases of cancer were diagnosed in Australia in 2019 (excluding non-melanoma skin cancers).
- In 2015, an estimated 981,767 non-melanoma skin cancers were diagnosed nationally.² Non-melanoma skin cancers are the most frequently occurring cancer in Australia, but the least life-threatening.
- Apart from non-melanoma skin cancers, the most common cancers diagnosed in Australia in 2019 were breast (13.5%), prostate (13.48%), colorectal (bowel) (11%), melanoma (10.5%) and lung cancer (9%).
- One in two men and women were diagnosed with cancer before the age of 85.
- Three out of every 10 deaths in Australia were due to cancer.
- About 49,896 people were expected to die from cancer in Australia in 2019, an average of 136 deaths each day.
- Lung cancer (18%) was the leading cause of cancer-related deaths, followed by colorectal (11%), prostate (6.6%), breast (6.2%) and pancreatic (6%).
- The number of deaths due to cancer has steadily increased over time, due mainly to population growth and ageing; however the death rate (number of deaths per 100,000 people) has fallen by 24 per cent between 1982 and 2019.
- Seven out of every 10 cancer patients will survive at least five years after diagnosis.
- The overall five-year relative survival for cancer has increased from 50 per cent (1986-1990) to 68.9 per cent (2011-2015)³, and survival rates have improved for many common cancers across this timespan.
- There were 1,228,905 cancer related hospitalisations reported in Australia during 2016-2017⁴, accounting for one in 10 hospitalisations.
- In 2008-09, it was estimated that cancer cost the Australian health system more than \$4.5 billion (7 per cent of total health system expenditure on chronic disease).⁵

Additional details are available in the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare report [Cancer in Australia 2019](#). Additional data are available [online](#).

For more information about cancer in Australia, please contact Cancer Council Information and Support on 13 11 20 or visit Cancer Council Australia's website [cancer.org.au](#).

References

- 1 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) 2018 Cancer Data in Australia; Australian Cancer Incidence and Mortality (ACIM) books: all cancers combined Canberra: AIHW. <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/cancer/cancer-data-in-australia/>.
- 2 Fransen M, Karahalios A, Sharma N, English DR, Giles GG, Sinclair RD, 2012. Non-melanoma skin cancer in Australia. Med J Aust 2012; 197: 565-568. doi: 10.5694/mja12.10654.
- 3 Cancer Data in Australia 2019, Last updated 21 Mar 2019 <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/cancer/cancer-data-in-australia/contents/summary> . Cat. no.CAN 123. Canberra: AIHW
- 4 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2019. Cancer in Australia 2019. Cat. no. CAN 123. Canberra: AIHW
- 5 Australian Institute of Health and Welfare 2013. Health system expenditure on cancer and other neoplasms in Australia, 2008-09. Cancer series no. 81. Cat. no.78. Canberra: AIHW.

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