

Cancer Patient Outcomes

Localized cancer can be consistently cured by surgery.

The problem is metastatic cancer, or cancer that has spread to distant sites in the body.

Metastatic Cancer

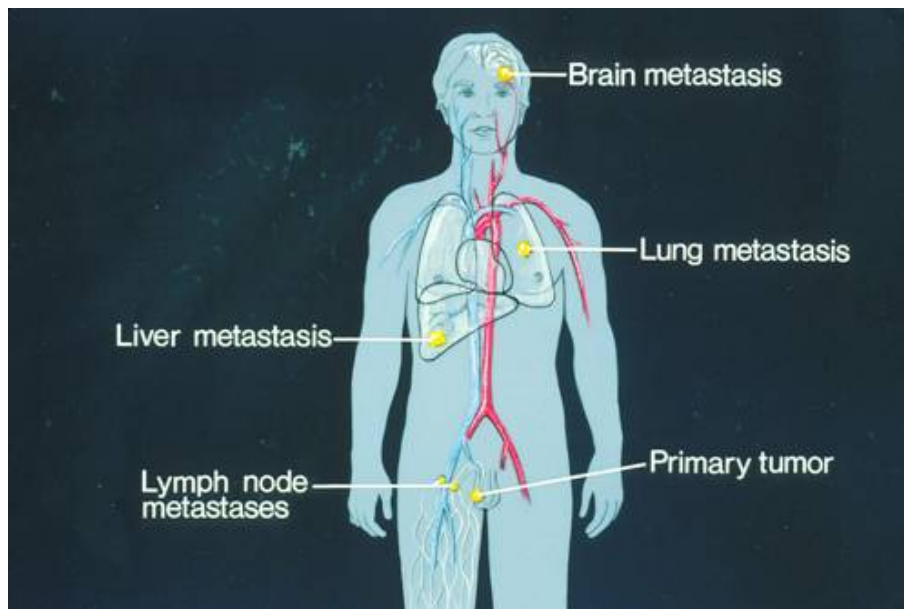


Illustration NCI

Some types of metastatic cancer can be cured with combination chemotherapy.

The cure rate for [childhood cancers](#) is 80%. The cure rate for acute lymphoblastic leukemia is now about 80%. Wilm's tumor, a cancer of the kidneys, is cured about 90% of the time. Hodgkin's lymphoma in kids is cured 91% of the time. The five-year survival rate for metastatic [testicular cancer](#) is 96%. However, chemotherapy is frequently accompanied by harsh side effects and potentially [serious toxicity](#).

Most common types of metastatic cancers are often incurable

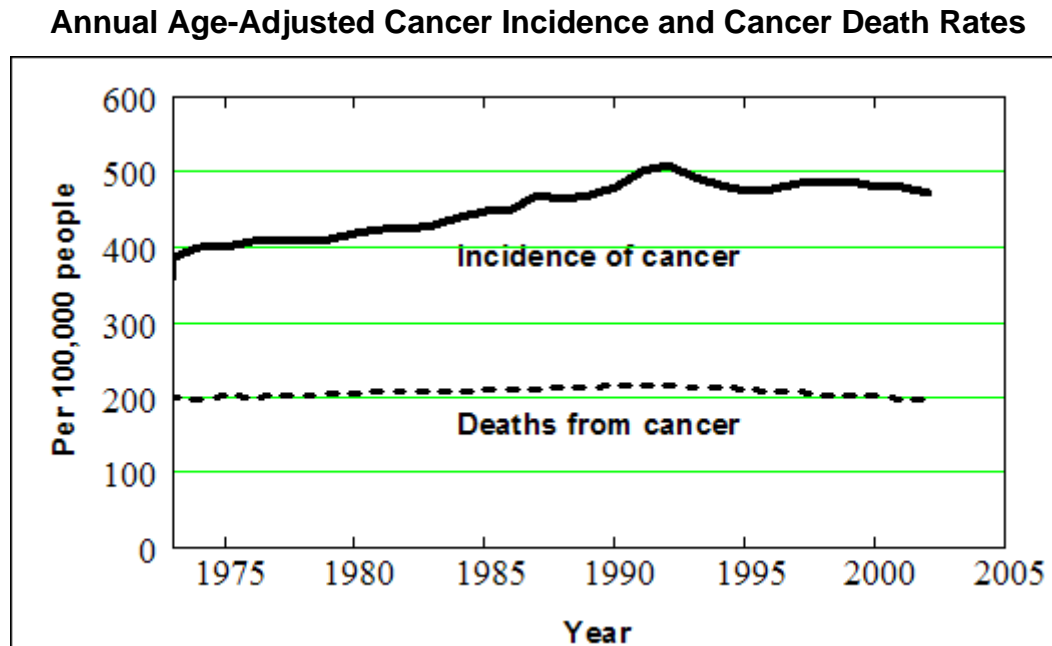
The five-year [relative survival rate](#) for all types of cancers is currently only 64%. [Click here to see an NCI graph of survival rates for all types of cancer.](#)

Over 3.6 million "cancer survivors" are expected to die from cancer

There are currently 10 million people who are [cancer survivors](#) living with a diagnosis of cancer. Approximately 36% will die from their disease unless there are major advances in cancer therapy.

There has been little improvement in cancer death rates over the last 30 years

In the last thirty years there has been very little improvement in the annual [age-adjusted cancer death rates](#). This statistic integrates all progress in cancer including prevention, early detection, surgery, cancer chemotherapy, radiation therapy, immunotherapy and access to medical care. It provides the bottom line result. The most recent data from the NCI for both sexes combined is shown below: [Additional data from the NCI can be obtained by clicking here](#) and [here](#).



The graph plainly shows that there has been little improvement in overall cancer death rates over the last 32 years. [For a graph of cancer mortality by sex click here](#).

Smoking and cancer deaths

The adverse impact of smoking is so significant, that [if cancers attributable to smoking were omitted from the statistics](#) then between 1950 and 1998, there would have been a 31% decrease in the death rate from cancer.

Cancer and age

There has been a steep reduction in the [cancer death rate in the age range of 20 to 54](#). However, the rate of cancer skyrockets after about age 54. [Click here](#) to see an NCI graph of cancer incidence versus age.

We are not winning the “War on Cancer”

Over the last thirty years society has invested almost \$200 billion on cancer research. Progress has been made. Much has been learned. However, it is an objective fact that most types of metastatic cancer remain all too frequently incurable. Clifton Leaf's excellent overview of the problem in Fortune magazine is on point. [Why We're Losing the War on Cancer — and How to Win It.](#)

What will it take to cure cancer without serious side effects?

Why do 570,000 Americans still die each year of cancer? Why has cancer been such an intractable problem? What is required to cure cancer? These and other issues are analyzed in this website.