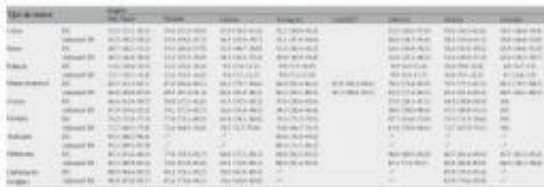


The probability of surviving nine types of cancer is analyzed

July 15 2010



This graphics displays the survival after five years from nine types of tumor according to the region studied. Credit: María Dolores Chirlaque

Spanish epidemiologists have presented information on survival of nine types of cancer in Spain and have compared it with other European countries. At five years from diagnosis, the lowest survival rate is observed in lung cancer (less than 11 percent), and the highest in testicular cancer (95 percent). Cancer survival in Spain is at the European average.

"The innovative factor contributed by our work is its relevance to population and measurement of relative survival, which enables us to discover survival related to cancer in a more precise way", María Dolores Chirlaque, main author of the study and researcher in the Epidemiology Service of the Department of Health and Consumption in Murcia, explains to SINC.

The investigation, which has been published in the journal *Annals of*

Oncology, involved the participation of eight Spanish regions which currently hold a population record of cancer (Basque Country, Navarra, Girona, Tarragona, Castellón, Albacete, Murcia and Granada). It shows all the cases of cancer diagnosed between 1995 and 1999 (57,622), their monitoring until December 2004, and their prognosis.

The results enable us to understand the situation and survival five years after the diagnosis of eight malignant tumours in Spain (breast, lung, colon, rectum, prostate, ovary, testicle, melanoma and Hodgkin's lymphoma).

"When compared to the survival average in Europe, Spain is very close to the European average for the nine tumours studied, with differences less than 2%", highlights the researcher. The highest survival rate for most of the tumours is observed in Finland, Sweden, Norway and Iceland. On the other hand, the lowest corresponds to the Czech Republic, Poland and Slovenia.

As for Spain, the greatest differences have been detected in [lung cancer](#) (12.4% in Navarra as opposed to 6.1% in Granada), and the smallest, in breast cancer (91.3% in Castellón versus 81.2% in Albacete). [*More information in the table attached].

Survival percentages

"In the past cancer was considered to be fatal. However, nowadays it has come to be recognised as a curable illness", Chirlaque points out.

"Testimony to this is the results shown in this study, which indicate that of every four people who suffer from it (with the exception of lung cancer), more than three overcome it".

1. Breast cancer, the most common tumour in women, presents a

high survival percentage: 83% of patients have survived this type of cancer after five years.

2. Lung cancer is one of the most aggressive tumours and survival after five years is very low: only 10% of patients diagnosed with a malignant neoplasm survive for more than five years.
3. Colorectal cancer (of the colon and rectum), the most common malignant tumour if we group men and women together, presents an average survival rate of 50-55% five years after diagnosis, meaning that half the patients survive this form of cancer.
4. Prostate cancer, today the most common tumour in men, has an increasingly favourable prognosis, with a global survival rate of 76%, which is higher in young adults.
5. Ovarian cancer presents a very varied prognosis depending on age: whilst 70% of the group between 15 and 44 years survives this form of cancer, this is the case for only 19% of those over 74 years-old.
6. Testicular [cancer](#), a rare malignant tumour that mainly affects middle-aged males, is the tumour with the best prognosis, with a 95% survival rate five years after diagnosis.
7. Skin melanoma displays one of the highest [survival rates](#), reaching values over 85%, although there are European countries where recovery exceeds 90%.
8. Hodgkin's lymphoma displays high recovery with survival greater than 92% amongst young people, although amongst elderly groups it fails to reach 50%.

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