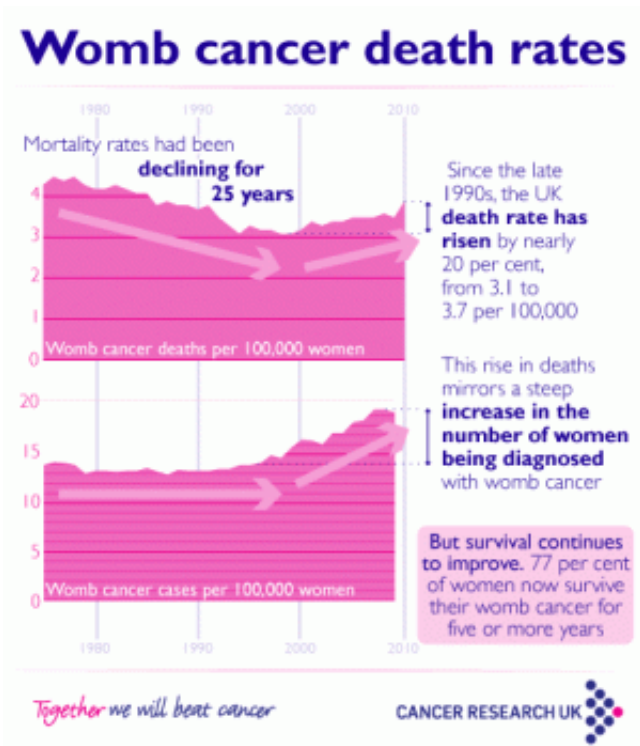


Womb cancer deaths rise by a fifth in the last decade

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(Medical Xpress) -- Deaths from womb (uterine) cancer have risen by nearly twenty per cent in the last decade, according to new figures from Cancer Research UK today.

Since the late 1990s, the mortality rate has risen from 3.1 to 3.7 per

100,000 in the UK. This means more than 1,900 women are now dying from the disease each year, compared to fewer than 1,500 at the turn of the millennium.

But [survival rates](#) from [womb cancer](#) continue to improve – with 77 per cent of women now surviving their disease five years or more.

The rise in deaths follows a steep increase in the number of women being diagnosed with womb cancer, with incidence rising by 43 per cent since the mid 1990s, from 13.7 to 19.6 per 100,000.

Prior to this, incidence of womb cancer had been constant for at least 25 years, and mortality had been declining.

Obesity at least doubles the risk of womb cancer, and has been linked to many other cancer types, leading experts to believe it could be a key factor driving up incidence.

So although survival from womb cancer continues to improve gradually, more women are in fact dying from the disease, because of the recent rise in numbers of women being diagnosed.

Professor Jonathan Ledermann, Cancer Research UK's gynaecological cancer expert, said: “It’s hugely troubling that more women are dying from womb cancer, but we shouldn’t let this cloud the fact that the chances of surviving the disease are still better than ever. This is due to better organisation of care for women’s cancers and more widespread use of one-stop clinics for post-menopausal bleeding, as well as advances in the use of surgery, chemotherapy and radiotherapy through clinical trials. It’s clear we’re making great progress, but we don’t yet fully understand what’s driving up cases of womb cancer, so there’s still lots more to do.”

Londoner Sharon Robinson, 56, who is a womb cancer survivor, said: “When I first had bleeding I thought it might be something to do with the menopause, but then it became more serious and I went to my doctor. Being told I had cancer was terrifying, as I knew it meant having my womb removed followed by weeks of radiotherapy. But in the end it was all worth it because here I am today cancer free. It’s so important that women who have symptoms like bleeding after the menopause go to their doctor without delay, as spotting cancer early save lives.”

Sara Hiom, director of information at Cancer Research UK, said: “Despite survival rates continuing to improve, these worrying figures show more women are still dying from womb cancer. This appears to be related to a rise in the incidence of womb cancer, so it’s essential women receive support to help them reduce their risk.

“Maintaining a healthy bodyweight can halve a woman’s risk of womb cancer and is one of the best ways to protect against the disease. Women should also be aware of the symptoms of womb cancer which include abnormal vaginal bleeding – especially for post-menopausal [women](#) - abdominal pain and pain during sex.

“Although these symptoms don’t usually mean cancer, as they could be signs of more common conditions like fibroids or endometriosis, it’s still vital to get them checked by a doctor. The earlier the disease is diagnosed, the more likely treatment will be successful.”

Provided by Cancer Research UK

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