

# Equation helps identify global disparities in cancer screening and treatment

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Disparities in cancer screening, incidence, treatment, and survival are worsening globally. In a new study on colorectal cancer, researchers found that the mortality-to-incidence ratio (MIR) can help identify whether a country has a higher mortality than might be expected based on cancer incidence.

Countries with lower-than-expected MIRs have strong national health systems characterized by formal colorectal [cancer screening](#) programs. Conversely, countries with higher-than-expected MIRs are more likely to lack such screening programs.

The findings suggest that the MIR has potential as an indicator of the long-term success of global cancer surveillance programs.

"The MIR appears to be a promising method to help identify global populations at risk for screenable cancers. In this capacity, it is potentially a useful tool for monitoring an important cancer outcome that informs and improves health policy at a national and international level," said Dr. Vasu Sunkara, lead author of the *Cancer* study.

Senior author Dr. James Hébert, who had used the MIR previously at the state and national level within the US, added that the use of the MIR internationally opens new possibilities for testing the relationship between this important indicator of cancer outcome and characteristics of countries' [health care delivery](#) systems.

**More information:** Cameron, T. A., Lucas, S. J. E. and Machado, L. (2014), Near-infrared spectroscopy reveals link between chronic physical activity and anterior frontal oxygenated hemoglobin in healthy young women. *Psychophysiology*. DOI: [10.1111/psyp.12394](https://doi.org/10.1111/psyp.12394)

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