

Study estimates rising global burden of gallbladder and biliary tract cancer

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Although cancers that occur in the gallbladder or bile ducts are rare, their rates are increasing. A recent study provides details on the burden of gallbladder and biliary tract cancer (GBTC) across 195 countries and territories from 1990 to 2017. The findings are published early online in *Cancer*.

Determining GBTC estimates and trends in different global regions can help to guide research priorities and policies for prevention and treatment. With this in mind, a team of scientists examined publicly available information on GBTC from the Global Burden of Disease (GBD) project, an ongoing observational study that provides comprehensive burden levels and trends for all major diseases, injuries, and [risk factors](#) by region, sex, country, and age.

Findings from the study indicate that GBTC incidence increased by 76 percent, mortality increased by 65 percent, and disability-adjusted life years increased by 52 percent from 1990 to 2017. The researchers also estimated that, globally, there were 210,878 new cases, 173,974 deaths, and 3,483,046 disability-adjusted life years—the number of years lost from ill-health, disability, or [early death](#)—due to GBTC in 2017.

GBTC burden varied by sex, region, and age. Certain risk factors were also evident. Globally, an estimated 20.6 percent and 8.1 percent of GBTC-related deaths in females and males, respectively, were attributed to high body mass index.

"GBTC remains a major health burden worldwide. Our findings may be valuable for policymakers to establish cost-effective methods for the early diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of GBTC, reducing its modifiable risk factors, and reversing the [increasing trend](#)," the authors wrote.

Although the GBD Network is the source of the estimates used in this study, the authors of this paper are not members of the GBD collaborator network and were not involved in the production of these estimates. The GBD Network cannot speak to the accuracy of this description of the authors' methods, the fidelity of the reported estimates, or the rigor of the conclusions.

More information: "The global, regional and national burden of gallbladder and biliary tract cancer and its attributable risk factors in 195 countries and territories, 1990 to 2017: a systematic analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2017." *Cancer* (2021). [DOI: 10.1002/cncr.33476](https://doi.org/10.1002/cncr.33476)

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