

Incidence of local-stage cancers decreased from 2019 to 2022: Study

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From 2019 to 2020, the incidence of local-stage disease decreased significantly for 19 of 22 cancer types compared with stable year-over-year changes pre-COVID-19, according to a study published online Nov. 16 in the *International Journal of Cancer*.

Elizabeth J. Schafer, M.P.H., from the American Cancer Society in

Atlanta, and colleagues conducted a cross-sectional study to calculate delay- and age-adjusted incidence rates and rate ratios comparing changes in year-over-year incidence rates from 2016 to 2020 for 22 cancer types using data from the Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results 22-registry database.

The researchers found that for 19 of the 22 cancer types, the incidence of local-stage disease decreased significantly from 2019 to 2020, ranging from 4 to 18 percent for [urinary bladder cancer](#) and colorectal and laryngeal cancers, respectively, and deviating from the stable year-over-year changes seen pre-COVID-19.

During the corresponding period, incidence also declined for 16 and six [cancer types](#) for regional-stage and distant-stage disease, respectively. In historically marginalized populations, the decline in local-stage incidence for screening-detectable cancers was generally greater. During the first year of the COVID-19 pandemic, the decline in cancer incidence rates occurred mainly for local- and regional-stage diseases across racial and [ethnic groups](#).

"Cancer incidence rates during 2020 deviated from prepandemic patterns, likely due to the suspension of health care for both cancer and noncancer related [medical care](#)," Schafer said in a statement. "These findings have given us more evidence of the impact of the pandemic on cancer incidence rates by stage at diagnosis and race and ethnicity."

More information: Elizabeth J. Schafer et al, Changes in cancer incidence rates by stage during the COVID-19 pandemic in the US, *International Journal of Cancer* (2023). [DOI: 10.1002/ijc.34758](https://doi.org/10.1002/ijc.34758)

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