

Research pair finds Gen X people more susceptible to many types of cancers than prior generations

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A pair of biostatisticians at the U.S. National Cancer Institute, has found that members of Generation X are more susceptible to many kinds of cancers than their parents or grandparents were. In their study, [published](#) in the journal *JAMA Network Open*, Philip Rosenberg, and Adalberto Miranda-Filho analyzed cancer rates for multiple groups of people by age using data from the Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results program's 13-registry database.

The researchers began their effort as part of an overall mission to compare the health outcomes of several generations of people born in the U.S., from the [baby boomers](#) through to Gen X, defined as people born after the baby boom but before the millennials.

In this work, they focused exclusively on the likelihood of people of a given [generation](#) developing cancer of any type. To that end, they analyzed data from the Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results program's 13-registry database regarding people who had developed invasive cancers diagnosed between the ages of 35 to 84 years. In all, the pair analyzed data involving 3.8 million people who had been diagnosed with cancer.

The pair used the data to calculate [cancer rates](#) for several defined generations of Americans and then compared them against one another. They also created graphs showing cancer rates over time for all the people represented in the database over time and others that were specific to race.

The researchers found that Gen X people have a higher rate of [cancer](#) overall than their parents or grandparents. More specifically, they found women in the group are more likely to develop leukemia, non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, ovarian, pancreatic, colon, uterine, rectal, kidney and thyroid

cancers. And men in the group are more likely to develop prostate, rectal, kidney and thyroid cancers.

On the other hand, they did find that the group was less likely to develop other types of cancers—women in the group were less likely to develop cervical and lung cancers, and men had lower rates of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, gallbladder, liver and lung cancers.

The researchers also found rates differed by race—Hispanic women, for example, were found to have one of the biggest jumps in risk over prior generations of any other group.

More information: Philip S. Rosenberg et al, Cancer Incidence Trends in Successive Social Generations in the US, *JAMA Network Open* (2024). [DOI: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2024.15731](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2024.15731)

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