

Study shows modest improvement in advanced lung cancer overall survival rates

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Research released in the December 2009 issue of *Lung Cancer* the *Journal of Thoracic Oncology* sought to determine whether the survival improvement among patients with metastatic lung cancer has improved over the last two decades as reported in controlled clinical trials.

Researchers performed an analysis of over 100,000 patients with stage IV non-small cell [lung cancer](#) (NSCLC) identified through the SEER database to evaluate trends in survival between 1990 and 2005 to assess the true impact of recent medical advances on these patients. Daniel Morgensztern, MD of the Washington University School of Medicine and his team reviewed over 16 years of records from those in the unselected representative patient population and found a modest, but statistically significant, improvement in overall survival rates. Specifically, one-year overall survival increased from 13.2 percent to 19.4 percent. Additionally, two-year overall survival increased from 4.5 percent to 7.8 percent.

Researchers noted the improvement in survival outcomes may reflect changes in the management of advanced NSCLC over the past two decades, including the development of new chemotherapy agents and regimens, increasing use of salvage chemotherapy and the introduction of molecularly targeted therapies.

"Although the development of several new agents led to a statistically significant survival improvement between 1990 and 2005, it is sobering that the one-year survival has improved by only 6 percent during this time," says Dr. Morgensztern. "Real progress can only be achieved with a better understanding of tumor biology and development of novel therapies."

More information: [Journal of Thoracic Oncology](#) (JTO): journals.lww.com/jto

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