

Risk factor sheet

Age-specific population risks of prostate cancer in Australia: An update

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Background

In 2005 a paper published in the Medical Journal of Australia¹ discussed the importance of communicating risk of prostate cancer to men effectively. One important component of this risk communication is that the risk estimates need to be age-specific. The age-specific estimates presented previously¹ were based on Australian incidence and mortality data from 1997-2001. With the availability of more recent data, we have provided updated age-specific risk estimates for prostate cancer among the Australian male population.

Methods

Australian cancer incidence and mortality data was obtained from the Australia Institute of Health and Welfare², with additional information for rates among men aged 85-89 years obtained separately³. The latest 5-year period for which incidence data was available is 2001-2005, while for mortality it is 2002-2006.

Table 1: Risk of diagnosis of, and death from, prostate cancer by age among males in Australia (per 1,000 men).

Age (years)	Risk of diagnosis (2001-2005)	Risk of death (2002-2006)
Risk within the next 10 years		
40	1	<0.1
50	18	1
60	59	5
70	86	19
80	101	58
Risk before turning 80		
40	164	25
50	163	25
60	145	24
70	86	19

Age-specific risks of being diagnosed with or dying from prostate cancer were calculated using cumulative rates (risk per 1,000 men). These risks represent the risk of a man at the start of the age group moving through to the end of that age group, experiencing the current age-specific rates. To estimate the incidence and mortality rates

Results

The numbers in Table 1 below represent the approximate number of men, out of 1,000, who are expected to be diagnosed (in the second column) or die (in the third column) from prostate cancer. For example, of 1000 men aged 60 years, 59 would be expected to be diagnosed with prostate cancer and 5 of those 1000 would be expected to die of prostate cancer before they reached 70 years of age.

Similarly, for 1000 men aged 60, about 24 would be expected to die of prostate cancer before they reached 80 years of age.

Implications

These updated results represent only minor changes to the results reported previously¹. These minor changes reflect the recent increases in prostate cancer incidence and reductions in prostate cancer mortality among Australian males².

References:

1. Baade PD, Steginga SK, Pinnock CB, Aitken JF. Communicating prostate cancer risk: what should we be telling our patients? *Med J Aust* 2005;182:472-5.
2. AIHW. ACIM (Australian Cancer Incidence and Mortality) Books. (http://www.aihw.gov.au/cancer/data/acim_books/index.cfm - Accessed 30 August 2009): Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2009.
3. AIHW. Unpublished Australian prostate cancer incidence and mortality rates, men aged 85-89 years. Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2009.