

General Information

Background¹

Lung cancer is the uncontrolled growth of abnormal cells in one or both of the lungs. Tobacco smoke causes more than 80% of lung cancers. Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death for both men and women. More people die of lung cancer than of colon, breast and prostate cancers combined.

Risk Factors¹

- Smoking or tobacco smoke exposure
- Exposure to radon
- Marijuana use
- Exposure to talc and certain other minerals
- A diet low in fruits and vegetables
- Exposure to asbestos
- Exposure to carcinogens in the workplace
- Tuberculosis and certain types of pneumonia
- Personal and/or family history of lung cancer
- Air pollution

Prevention¹

The best way to prevent lung cancer is to not smoke and to avoid breathing second hand smoke. In addition, people who smoke should quit. Other preventive measures include reducing any exposure to cancer-causing chemicals or agents.

Size

San Diego County

The age-adjusted incidence rate of lung cancer in San Diego County in 2000 was 62.3 per 100,000 population.

California³

The age-adjusted incidence rate of lung cancer in California from 1996-2000 was 76.5 per 100,000 male population and 50.4 per 100,000 female population.

National³

The age-adjusted incidence rate of lung cancer in the U.S. from 1996-2000 was 91.5 per 100,000 male population and 53.4 per 100,000 female population. In 2004 there will be about 173,770 new cases of lung cancer in the United States: 93,110 among men and 80,660 among women.

High-risk Populations¹

The following populations have a higher risk for developing lung cancer than the general population:

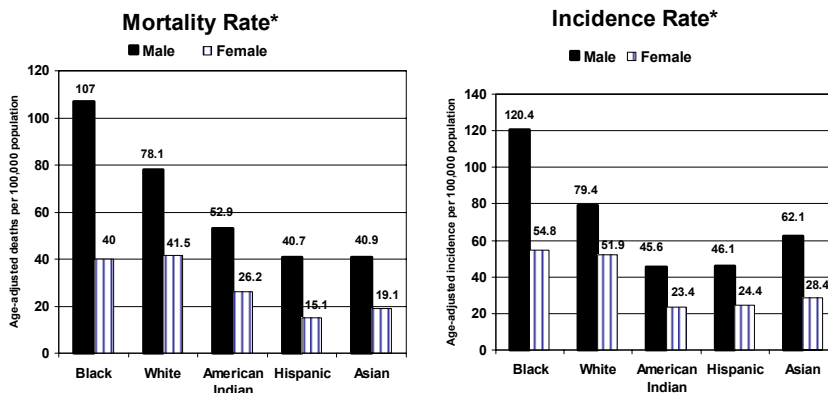
- Smokers and persons living with smokers—The longer a person smokes or is exposed to tobacco smoke, the greater the risk for developing lung cancer.
- Individuals who experience exposure to radon or other cancer-causing substances.
- Those with a high school education or less.

Healthy People 2010 Objective 3-2: Reduce lung cancer deaths to 44.9 deaths per 100,000 population.⁴

Size (continued)

Lung Cancer Related Rates

Nationally 1996 – 2000

By Race/Ethnicity³

*Per 100,000, age-adjusted to the 2000 US standard population.

Seriousness

San Diego County

- During 2002, 1,148 San Diego residents died of lung cancer, representing 25% of all cancer-related deaths in the County.⁵
- During 2002, the age-adjusted mortality rate was 44.3 lung cancer deaths per 100,000 population; 55.2 deaths per 100,000 population for males and 36.3 deaths per 100,000 population for females.⁵
- San Diego County ranks 24th in the state based on age-adjusted lung cancer death rate in 2000—2002.⁶

California

- The age-adjusted death rate from lung cancer in California from 2000 to 2002 was 44.8 per 100,000 population.⁶

National

- The 2002 age-adjusted mortality rate for lung cancer was 55.1 per 100,000 population.⁷
- It is estimated 160,440 people will die of lung cancer in the U.S in 2004: 91,930 men and 68,510 women.³
- The five-year overall survival rate for lung cancer is 15 percent.³

Trends

- Since 2000, the lung cancer mortality rate in San Diego County has decreased by almost 12 percent.⁵

Age

- In San Diego County, lung cancer mortality among those over the age of 64 years is higher than for other age groups and has shown a decrease over the past three years.⁵

Race/Ethnicity

- While the age-adjusted lung cancer mortality rates have decreased among white and Hispanic residents of San Diego County since 2000, the rates among African Americans have remained higher than these groups and decreased only very slightly.⁵
- Nationally, age-adjusted lung cancer mortality rates among African American males are approximately 40 percent higher than for white males.⁹

Gender

- In San Diego County, between 2000 and 2002, age-adjusted mortality rates for both males and females have decreased.⁵
- In 2001, the U.S. age-adjusted mortality rate for males was 75.2 per 100,000 population, while the rate for females was 41.0 per 100,000 population.¹⁰
- Since 1987, more females have died in the U.S. from lung cancer than breast cancer.⁹

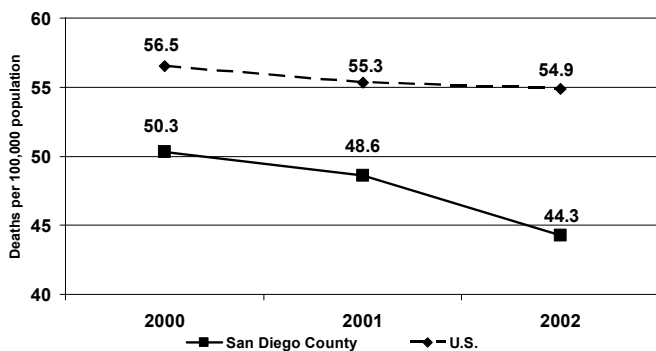
Geographic Location

- In San Diego County in 2002, lung cancer mortality rates were higher in the central and east regions than in other regions.⁵

Seriousness (continued)

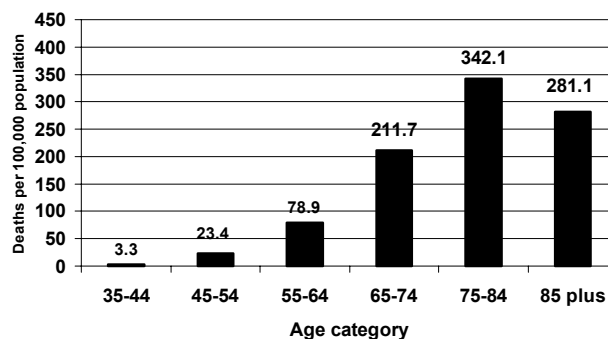
Lung Cancer Mortality Rates

San Diego County & U.S. 2000 – 2002^{5,11}



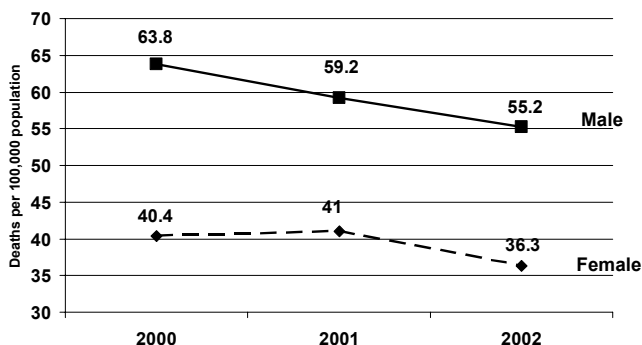
Lung Cancer Mortality Rates

Age-Specific
San Diego County – 2002⁵



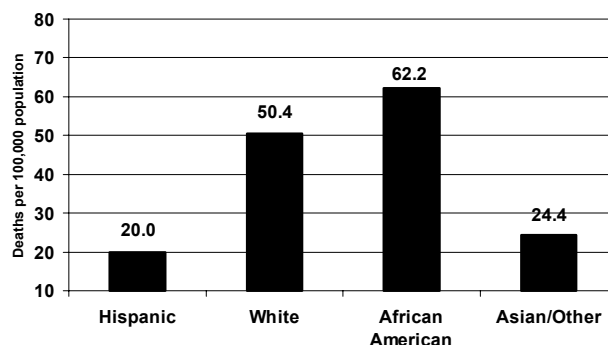
Lung Cancer Mortality Rates

by Gender
San Diego County 2000 - 2002⁵



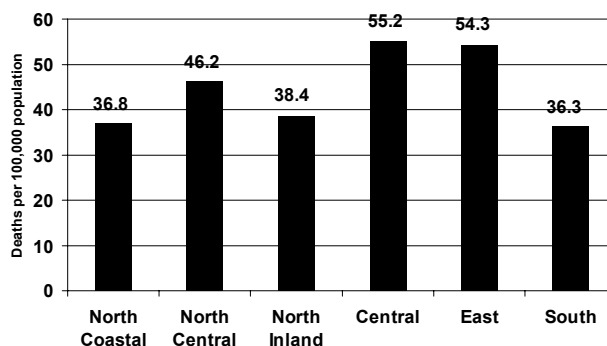
Lung Cancer Mortality Rates

By Race/Ethnicity
San Diego County - 2002⁵



Lung Cancer Mortality Rates

By Geographic Region
San Diego County 2002⁵



Community Concern*

Focus Group Discussion Points

Although lung cancer was not mentioned specifically, cancer in general was mentioned as a concern in six of the nine focus groups. The majority of those expressing concern had some personal experience with cancer, either having had it themselves or having family members who had cancer.

Key Informant Scoring

Overall, key informants scored cancer as eighth most important out of 14 health issues presented. When scoring health issues important to adults aged 65 and over, key informants scored cancer as second most important.

*Please note that focus groups and key informant surveys are qualitative in nature and findings presented may not be representative of a larger population.

References

1. American Cancer Society. Retrieved September, 2004 from www.cancer.org
2. Anton-Culver H, Trejo R, Taylor TH, Bringman D, Rowley K, Leach S, and Robles Y. *Cancer Incidence and Mortality in San Diego County, 1996-2000*. Irvine, CA: Cancer Surveillance Program of Orange County/San Diego Imperial Organization for Cancer Control, Epidemiology Division, Department of Medicine, University of California Irvine, January, 2003.
3. American Cancer Society (2004), *Cancer Facts & Figures, 2003*, Atlanta, GA.
4. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Healthy People 2010: Understanding and Improving Health*. 2nd ed. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, November 2000.
5. County of San Diego data is provided by the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency, Department of Community Epidemiology, and is based on data provided by the California Department of Health Services, Center for Health Statistics, Vital Statistics Section.
6. California Department of Health Services. (2004) *County Health Status Profiles 2004*. Retrieved September, 2004 from <http://www.dhs.ca.gov/hisp/chs/phweek/cprofile2004/profile2004.pdf>
7. American Lung Association, Trends in Lung Cancer Morbidity and Mortality, Epidemiology and Statistic Unit Research and Scientific Affairs, June 2004.
8. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Healthy People 2010*. 2nd ed. With *Understanding and Improving Health and Objectives for Improving Health*. 2 vols. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, November 2000.
9. Kochanek KD, Smith BL, Deaths: Final Data for 2001, National vital statistics reports; vol. 52, no 3. Hyattsville, Maryland: National Center for Health Statistics. 2003.
10. American Lung Association. *Facts About Lung Cancer*. Retrieved December, 2004 from www.lungusa.org
11. Kochanek KD, Smith BL, Deaths: Final Data for 2002, National vital statistics reports; vol. 53, no 5. Hyattsville, Maryland: National Center for Health Statistics. 2004.