

Global burden of cervical cancer: a literature review

ABSTRACT

Background: Cervical cancer is the fourth most common cancer in women, and the seventh overall. As with liver cancer, a large majority of the global burden occurs in the less developed regions, where it accounts for almost 12% of all female cancers. This article reviews the global burden of cervical cancer, and the distribution of the disease according to various regions.

Materials and method: An electronic literature search through Google Scholar and ProQuest Central was undertaken to determine the best estimates on cervical cancer incidence and mortality using recently compiled data from cancer and mortality registries since 2008. Additional information was gathered from manual search of relevant articles in the reference lists of selected resources. Altogether, 19 references were used in this review.

Results: There were an estimated 528,000 new cases of cervical cancer and 266,000 deaths in 2012. It is the fourth most common cancer globally. The incidence of cervical cancer varied widely among countries with world age-standardized rates (ASR) ranging from 4.4 to 75.9 per 100 000 population. About 85% of all new cervical cancer cases and 87% of all cervical cancer deaths occur in the less developed regions. High-risk regions, with estimated ASRs over 30 per 100,000, include Eastern Africa (42.7), Melanesia (33.3), Southern (31.5) and Middle (30.6) Africa. Rates are lowest in Australia/New Zealand (5.5) and Western Asia (4.4). Cervical cancer accounts for 7.5% of all female cancer deaths. Mortality varied 18-fold between the different regions of the world, with rates ranging from less than 2/100,000 in Western Asia, Western Europe and Australia/New Zealand to more than 20/100,000 in Melanesia (20.6), Middle (22.2) and Eastern (27.6) Africa.

Conclusions: Despite of effective screening methods, cervical cancer continues to be a major public health problem. New methodologies of cervical cancer prevention should be made available and accessible for women of all countries through well-organized programs.

Keyword: Cervical cancer; Global estimates; HPV; Human papillomavirus; Incidence; Mortality