How common is cancer?

- There are more than 200 types of cancer, each with different causes, symptoms and treatments.
- Around 309,500 people were diagnosed with cancer in 2008 in the UK, that's around 850 people every day.
- Every two minutes someone in the UK is diagnosed with cancer.
- More than 1 in 3 people in the UK will develop some form of cancer during their lifetime.
- Breast, lung, bowel and prostate cancers together account for over half of all new cancers each year.
- Cancer can develop at any age, but is most common in older people. More than three out of five cancers are diagnosed in people aged 65 and over.
- Around one per cent of cancers occur in children, teenagers and young adults (up to age 24).
- Overall cancer incidence rates have increased by more than a quarter since the late 1970s, but the rates have been fairly stable since the late 1990s.
- Cancer incidence rates have risen by 16% in males and by 34% in females since the late 1970s.
- There have been increases in the incidence of many potentially avoidable cancers such as kidney, malignant melanoma (skin), oral and uterine (womb) cancer.
- Over the last decade the incidence rate of stomach cancer has decreased by more than a quarter for both sexes. Cervical and ovarian cancer each decreased by more than 10% and the lung cancer incidence rate in males decreased by almost a fifth.
- Worldwide there were estimated to be around 12.7 million new cases of cancer in 2008 and over half of these were in developing countries.
- Cancer incidence rates have risen by 34% in females since the late 1970s.

How many people survive cancer?

- Half of people diagnosed with cancer now survive their disease for at least five years.
- Cancer survival rates in the UK have doubled in the last 40 years.
- Almost three-quarters of children with cancer are now cured of their disease, compared with around a quarter in the late 1960s.

How many people die from cancer?

- Cancer causes more than one in four of all deaths in the UK.
- More than three-quarters of cancer deaths occur in people aged 65 and over.
- In the UK there were around 156,000 deaths from cancer in 2009.
- 3,425 people died from cancer every day, that is one person every four minutes.
- Cancer death rates in the UK have fallen by a fifth over the last thirty years and by 9% over the last decade.
- Worldwide, it is estimated that around 7.6 million people died from cancer in 2008.
What causes cancer?

- An individual's risk of developing cancer depends on many factors, including age, lifestyle and genetic make-up.
- More than 40% of all cancers in the UK are linked to tobacco, alcohol, diet, overweight, inactivity, infection, radiation, occupation, post-menopausal hormones or breastfeeding.
- Cigarette smoking is the single most important cause of preventable death in the UK.
- Smoking causes nearly a fifth of all cancers in the UK (including over 80% of lung cancers).
- Each year in the UK, around 17,000 cases of cancer are linked to being overweight or obese.
- Around 12,500 cancers in the UK each year are linked to alcohol.
- Excessive exposure to UV radiation (from the sun or sunbeds) is the most important modifiable risk factor for skin cancers.
- Physical activity protects against colon, breast and womb cancer, independently of its effect on bodyweight.
- A few infectious agents, especially certain viruses, play a key role in causing certain types of cancer.
- It is estimated that inherited factors cause up to 10% of all cancers.
- Factors such as the age at which a woman has her first child, number of children, and whether or not she breastfeeds, affect risk of the most common female cancers.
- Nearly 4% of cancers in the UK are linked to occupation.

### All cancers combined – UK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Males</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th>Persons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of new cases</strong> (UK 2008)</td>
<td>155,326</td>
<td>154,201</td>
<td>309,527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Incidence rate per 100,000 population</strong></td>
<td>417.3</td>
<td>365.9</td>
<td>385.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Number of deaths</strong> (UK 2009)</td>
<td>82,034</td>
<td>74,056</td>
<td>156,090</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mortality rate per 100,000 population</strong></td>
<td>205.1</td>
<td>147.9</td>
<td>172.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Five-year survival rate</strong> (estimates of predicted survival for adult patients diagnosed in 2007, England &amp; Wales**)</td>
<td>45.9%</td>
<td>56.4%</td>
<td>51.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ten-year survival rate</strong> (estimates of predicted survival for adult patients diagnosed in 2007, England and Wales***)</td>
<td>39.3%</td>
<td>51.0%</td>
<td>45.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Cancer Research UK’s ‘CancerStats – Key Facts’ series provides accessible, top line statistics and facts on cancer. The charity’s Statistical Information Team also produces evidence-based reports, charts and tabulations. All of this information can be accessed on our CancerStats website: [http://info.cancerresearchuk.org/cancerstats](http://info.cancerresearchuk.org/cancerstats) or by emailing stats.team@cancer.org.uk.*