

February 2008

Introduction

Each year more than 284,000 people are diagnosed with cancer* in the UK (Table One). While there are more than 200 different types of cancer; four of them – breast, lung, large bowel (colorectal) and prostate – account for over half of all new cases. Breast cancer is the most common cancer in the UK despite it being rare in men. The 20 most commonly diagnosed cancers in the UK are shown in Figure One.^{1,4}

Table One: Number of new cases and rates of all malignant neoplasms*, UK, 2004

		England	Wales	Scotland	N. Ireland	UK
Number of new cases	Males	117,805	8,730	13,164	3,427	143,126
	Females	115,816	8,076	13,949	3,593	141,434
	Persons	233,621	16,806	27,113	7,020	284,560
Crude rate per 100,000 population	Males	480.2	608.4	539.8	409.7	489.4
	Females	453.8	531.2	531.1	411.3	463.1
	Persons	466.7	568.7	535.3	410.5	476.0
Age-standardised† rate per 100,000 population (CI 95%)	Males	400.1 (397.9-402.4)	464.8 (455.0-474.5)	452.6 (444.9-460.3)	401.6 (388.2-415.1)	408.1 (406.0-410.2)
	Females	342.1 (340.1-344.0)	372.2 (364.1-380.3)	388.9 (382.4-395.3)	352.0 (340.5-363.5)	348.1 (346.3-350.0)
	Persons	363.7 (362.2-365.2)	408.4 (402.2-414.5)	411.0 (406.1-415.9)	369.6 (360.9-378.2)	370.4 (369.0-371.8)

An individual's risk of developing cancer depends on many factors, including smoking behaviour; diet and genetic inheritance. Cancer is primarily a disease of older people; a person's risk of developing cancer increases with age. Overall, it is estimated that more than 1 in 3 people will develop some form of cancer during their lifetime. The risk of being diagnosed before age 50 is only 1 in 27.⁵

Non-melanoma skin cancer

While non-melanoma skin cancer (NMSC) is very common, it is curable in the vast majority of cases. In 2004 more than 72,000 new cases were registered. However, estimates suggest that a much higher number of cases are diagnosed each year in the UK because many cases are diagnosed and treated in the doctor's surgery and, as a result, we are not confident that all cases are registered.² NMSC is therefore usually not included in incidence figures for all cancers.

Age

Cancer occurs predominantly in older people, with almost three out of four cases (74%) diagnosed in people aged 60 and over; and more than a third (36%) in people aged over 75. Figure Two shows the numbers of newly diagnosed cancer cases and rates by age and sex in the UK.^{1,4}

Less than one per cent (0.5%) of all newly diagnosed cases occur in children under the age of 15: around 1,400 children were diagnosed in 2004.^{1,4} The risk of an individual child in Great Britain being diagnosed with cancer before the age of 15 is about 1 in 500. The solid tumours of the breast, lung, bowel and prostate, which are so common in older people, are rare in children. Leukaemia is the most common childhood cancer; responsible for nearly a third of all cases. Tumours of the brain and central nervous system account for around a quarter of newly diagnosed cases of childhood cancer⁶ (also see our **CancerStats** report on **Childhood cancer – UK**).⁷

Figure One: The 20 most commonly diagnosed cancers, UK, 2004

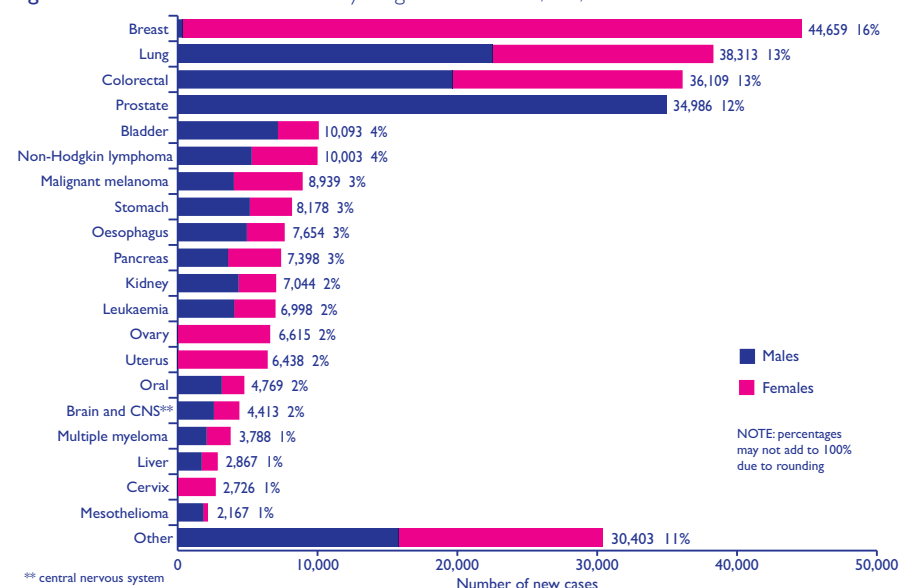
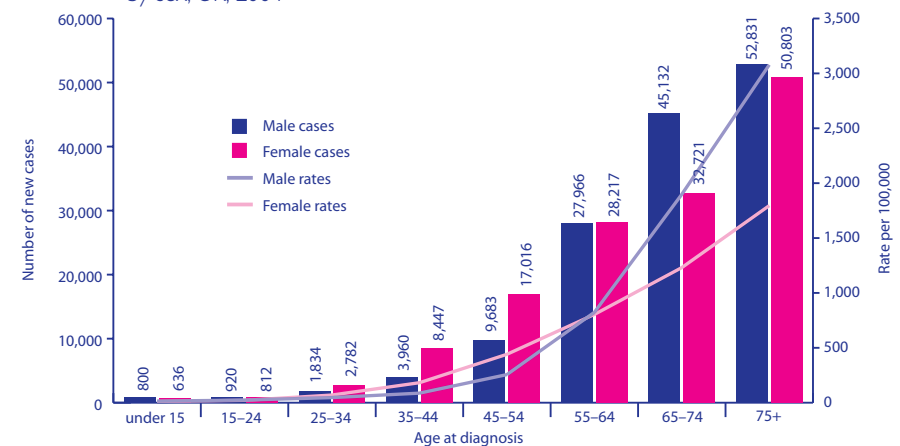


Figure Two: Number of new cases and age-specific incidence rates for all malignant neoplasms*, by sex, UK, 2004



* excluding non-melanoma skin cancer † to the European population

Age continued

Around 1,700 UK teenagers and young adults (15–24 years) were diagnosed with cancer in 2004, equating to less than one per cent (0.6%) of all new cancers. The most common cancer in males aged 15–24 years is testicular cancer, which accounts for almost a quarter of all cancers diagnosed in young men. Other common cancers for males in this group include Hodgkin's disease and leukaemia. In females of this age the most common cancers are malignant melanoma, Hodgkin's disease, ovarian and cervical cancer.[†]

Around 1 in 10 cases of cancer occur in people aged 25–49 years. Breast cancer is the most common cancer in this age group accounting for over 30% of all cancers. Malignant melanoma, bowel, testicular and cervical cancers are the next most likely to affect this stage of life. There are almost twice as many females diagnosed with cancer than males in the 25–49 year group, while in the over 65s the number of diagnoses is higher in males even though the female population is much larger.[†]

Sex

Prostate cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in UK males, with almost 35,000 newly diagnosed cases in 2004 (Figure Three). Lung cancer is the second most common cancer for males, with over 22,000 cases annually. Bowel cancer is the third most common male cancer, with around 20,000 cases each year. These three cancers – prostate, lung and bowel – account for over half of all male cases.

Breast cancer is by far the most common cancer in females, with over 44,000 new cases diagnosed in 2004 (Figure Four). It accounts for almost one third of all female cancers. This is followed by colorectal and lung cancer each with around 16,000 cases annually. Breast, bowel and lung cancer account for over half of all female cases.

Geographical variation

Generally, the northern regions of the UK have higher rates of cancer compared to the southern regions. The overall cancer incidence rate in the East of England is the lowest of all English regions (328 cases per 100,000) whereas the North of England is the highest (398 cases per 100,000). Scotland has the highest rates in the UK at 411 cases diagnosed in every 100,000 people.

The greatest geographical variation is seen in lung cancer incidence rates which range from around 35 per 100,000 in southern regions to 68 per 100,000 in Scotland.

Incidence trends

In the 30-year period between 1975 and 2004, the incidence rate for all cancers in Great

Figure Three: The 10 most common cancers, males, UK, 2004

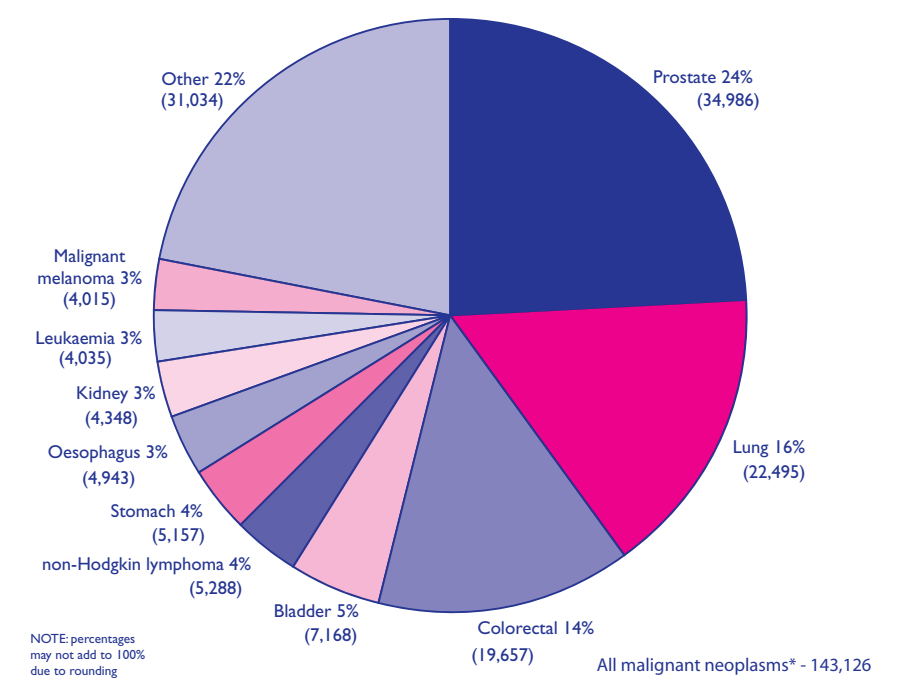


Figure Four: The 10 most common cancers, females, UK, 2004

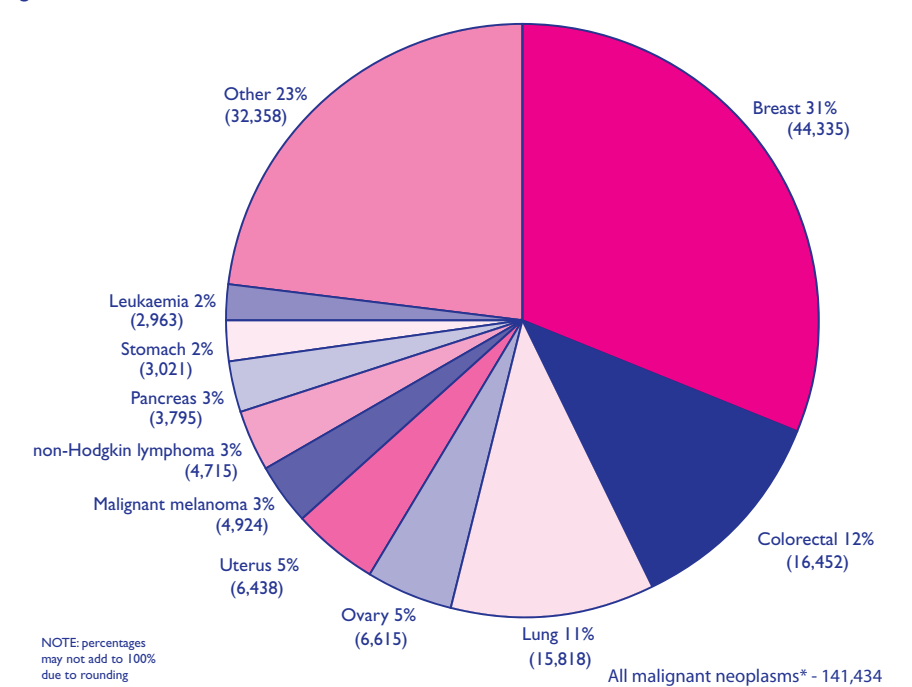
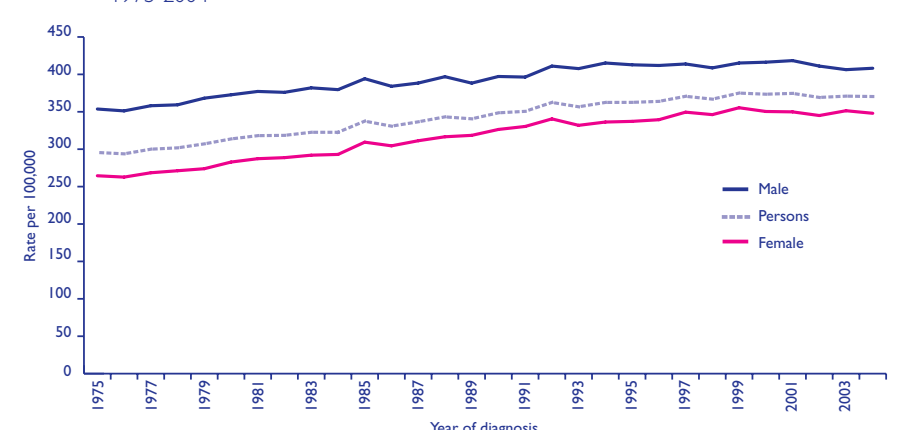


Figure Five: Age-standardised† incidence rates, all malignant neoplasms*, by sex, Great Britain, 1975-2004



* excluding non-melanoma skin cancer † to the European population

Britain has increased by 25% (15% increase in males and 32% in females). However, over the last 10 years rates have stabilised with a 1% fall in male rates and a small increase of 3% in female rates (Figure Five).¹⁴

The trends for individual cancers vary greatly (Figure Six). It is worth noting that the decrease in the incidence rate of bladder cancer may be affected by a change in coding practice (as recommended by the European Network of Cancer Registries and subsequently by the United Kingdom Association of Cancer Registries), which is likely to have contributed to the marked reduction in the number of registrations of invasive bladder cancer in the period 1999–2000. In addition, the use of prostate-specific antigen (PSA) testing may have contributed to the increase in new diagnoses of prostate cancer. The PSA test detects invasive cancers at an earlier stage as well as latent, non-lethal tumours that might otherwise have remained asymptomatic and undiagnosed during a man's lifetime.⁸⁻¹⁰

Even though research suggests that half of all cancers are preventable,¹¹ there have been large increases in the incidence of potentially avoidable cancers such as malignant melanoma, oral, uterine (womb) and kidney cancers.

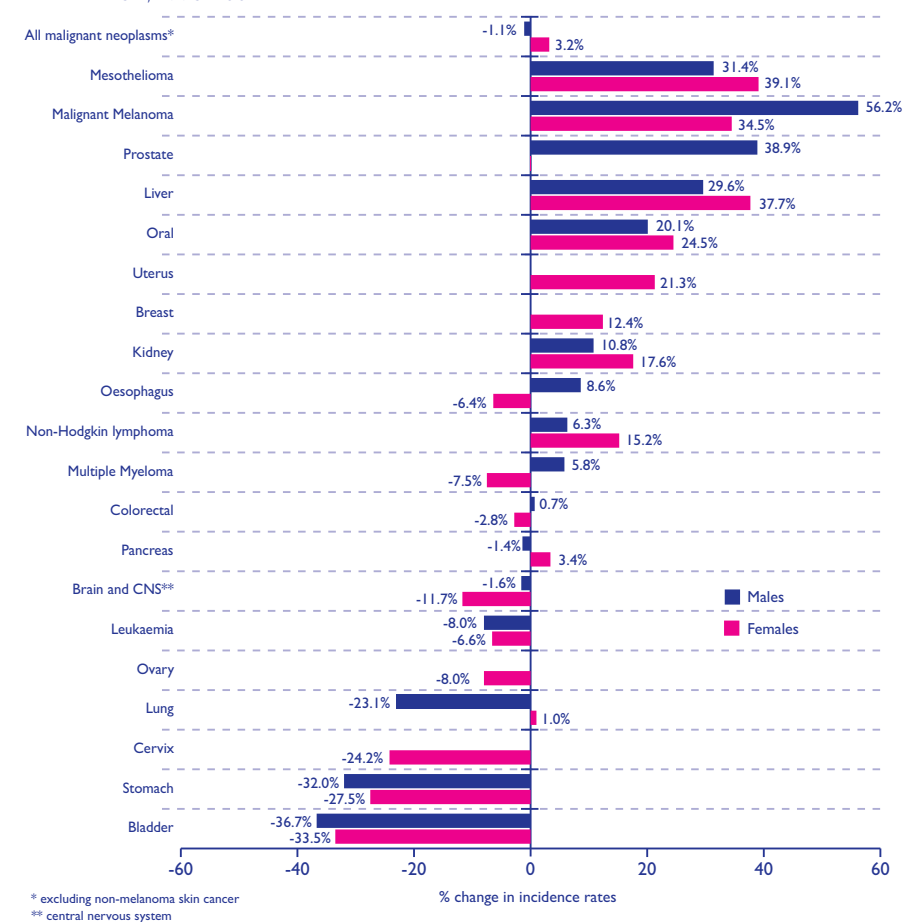
The most rapidly increasing cancer incidence rates in males are for malignant melanoma and prostate cancer. The most rapidly increasing common female cancer is malignant melanoma. Though female mesothelioma incidence rates have also increased rapidly it is a rare disease with an incidence rate of less than 1 in every 100,000 females.

Over the last decade there have been large decreases (more than 25%) in incidence rates of bladder and stomach cancers for both sexes. Female cervical cancer and male lung cancer incidence rates both decreased by nearly a quarter between 1995 and 2004.

Incidence by country and site

More detailed incidence statistics for the constituent countries of the UK by cancer site

Figure Six: Percentage change in the age-standardised† incidence rates, major cancers, UK, 1995-2004



are shown in Tables Two, Three and Four for males, females and persons respectively. The crude rates per 100,000 population for the UK are provided and rates for individual countries can be calculated using the population figures¹² at the base of each table, allowing comparisons between cancer sites. However, since the incidence of cancer is heavily age-dependent, the age-standardised rates are also provided to enable comparisons between populations with different age structures.

The information contained in this report and more is available on our website at: <http://info.cancerresearchuk.org/cancerstats>.

Cancer registration is a dynamic process and the data presented here may differ from other published data relating to the same time period.

For information on UK cancer statistics in comparison to the EU and worldwide, please refer to our CancerStats reports on Cancer in the European Union¹³ and Worldwide Cancer.¹⁴

For a list of other CancerStats reports email: cancerstats@cancer.org.uk or visit our website <http://info.cancerresearchuk.org/cancerstats>

* excluding non-melanoma skin cancer † to the European population

Acknowledgements

Cancer Research UK would like to acknowledge the essential work of the regional cancer registries in the UK www.ukacr.org

About Cancer Research UK

Cancer Research UK is the leading charity dedicated to research on the causes, treatment and prevention of cancer. If you would like to support our work please call 020 7009 8820 or visit our website www.cancerresearchuk.org.
Cancer Research UK, PO Box 123, London, WC2A 3PX
Tel 020 7242 0200

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Cancer site	ICD10 code	Number of new cases registered in:					UK rank by crude rate	% of all malignant neoplasms excl NMSC	UK crude rate	UK DAS (E)* rate
		England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland	UK				
All malignant neoplasms	C00-C97	150,104	10,281	17,293	4,643	182,321	..	..	623.4	518.2
All malignant neoplasms excl NMSC	C00-C97 excl C44	117,805	8,730	13,164	3,427	143,126	..	..	489.4	408.1
Bladder	C67	5,800	661	559	148	7,168	4	5.0%	24.5	19.5
Bone and Connective tissue	C40-C41, C47, C49	886	60	86	28	1,060	19	0.7%	3.6	3.3
Bone	C40-C41	221	19	20	7	267	..	0.2%	0.9	0.9
Connective tissue	C47, C49	665	41	66	21	793	..	0.6%	2.7	..
Brain with central nervous system	C70-C72	2,168	145	227	47	2,587	13	1.8%	8.8	8.1
Brain	C71	2,086	138	220	44	2,488	..	1.7%	8.5	7.7
Breast	C50	272	19	31	2	324	24	0.2%	1.1	0.9
Colorectal	C18-C21	16,103	1,133	1,914	507	19,657	3	13.7%	67.2	55.3
Colon	C18	9,275	667	1,178	300	11,420	..	8.0%	39.0	31.7
Rectum	C19-C21	6,828	466	736	207	8,237	..	5.8%	28.2	23.6
Eye	C69	169	26	23	2	220	26	0.2%	0.8	0.7
Gallbladder	C23	139	6	13	2	160	27	0.1%	0.5	0.5
Hodgkin's lymphoma	C81	697	45	79	23	844	20	0.6%	2.9	2.8
Kaposi's sarcoma	C46	76	3	5	0	84	29	0.1%	0.3	0.3
Kidney	C64-C66 + C68	3,567	267	406	108	4,348	8	3.0%	14.9	12.8
Larynx	C32	1,424	91	234	40	1,789	17	1.2%	6.1	5.3
Leukaemia	C91-C95	3,306	285	357	87	4,035	9	2.8%	13.8	11.9
Acute lymphoid leukaemia	C91.0	319	24	33	10	386	..	0.3%	1.3	1.4
Acute myeloid leukaemia	C92.0	1,007	89	112	31	1,239	..	0.9%	4.2	3.6
Chronic lymphoid leukaemia	C91.1	1,209	132	134	29	1,504	..	1.1%	5.1	4.2
Chronic myeloid leukaemia	C92.1	257	9	22	8	296	..	0.2%	1.0	0.9
Liver	C22	1,385	98	200	30	1,713	18	1.2%	5.9	4.9
Lung	C33-C34	18,105	1,313	2,506	571	22,495	2	15.7%	76.9	62.8
Malignant Melanoma	C43	3,307	207	389	112	4,015	10	2.8%	13.7	12.3
Mesothelioma	C45	1,534	77	174	41	1,826	16	1.3%	6.2	5.1
Multiple myeloma	C90	1,691	142	174	58	2,065	14	1.4%	7.1	5.8
Nasopharyngeal	C11	128	4	9	10	151	28	0.1%	0.5	0.5
Non-Hodgkin lymphoma	C82-C85 + C96	4,417	283	453	135	5,288	5	3.7%	18.1	15.7
Non-melanoma skin cancer	C44	32,299	1,551	4,129	1,216	39,195	..	..	134.0	110.1
Oesophagus	C15	4,047	254	536	106	4,943	7	3.5%	16.9	14.1
Oral	C00-C06+C09 +C10+C12-C14	2,441	189	430	89	3,149	12	2.2%	10.8	9.8
Lip	C00	132	17	32	12	193	..	0.1%	0.7	0.6
Tongue	C01-C02	695	59	109	26	889	..	0.6%	3.0	2.8
Mouth	C03-C06	688	48	143	25	904	..	0.6%	3.1	2.8
Oropharyngeal	C09-C10	533	37	68	11	649	..	0.5%	2.2	2.1
Pancreas	C25	3,039	207	286	71	3,603	11	2.5%	12.3	10.2
Penis	C60	331	21	45	21	418	23	0.3%	1.4	1.3
Prostate	C61	29,406	2,273	2,550	757	34,986	1	24.4%	119.6	97.7
Salivary glands	C07-C08	260	19	22	6	307	25	0.2%	1.0	0.9
Small intestine	C17	367	26	40	17	450	21	0.3%	1.5	1.3
Stomach	C16	4,210	309	515	123	5,157	6	3.6%	17.6	14.3
Testis	C62	1,616	95	178	69	1,958	15	1.4%	6.7	6.6
Thyroid	C73	373	25	41	6	445	22	0.3%	1.5	1.4
Population estimates (2004)		24,534,808	1,434,872	2,438,729	836,548	29,244,957				

Table Three: **FEMALES** - Number of new cases, percentage of all cancers diagnosed, UK rank and rate, by site and UK country, 2004

Cancer site	ICD10 code	Number of new cases registered in:					UK rank by crude rate	% of all malignant neoplasms excl NMSC	UK crude rate	UK DAS (E)* rate
		England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland	UK				
All malignant neoplasms	C00-C97	143,149	9,337	17,523	4,662	174,671	..	..	571.9	421.9
All malignant neoplasms excl NMSC	C00-C97 excl C44	115,816	8,076	13,949	3,593	141,434	..	..	463.1	348.1
Bladder	C67	2,337	253	273	62	2,925	11	2.1%	9.6	5.9
Bone and Connective tissue	C40-C41, C47, C49	645	54	75	19	793	21	0.6%	2.6	2.2
Bone	C40-C41	153	14	15	10	192	..	0.1%	0.6	0.6
Connective tissue	C47, C49	492	40	60	9	601	..	0.4%	2.0	..
Brain with central nervous system	C70-C72	1,523	90	166	47	1,826	15	1.3%	6.0	5.0
Brain	C71	1,425	86	161	45	1,717	..	1.2%	5.6	4.7
Breast	C50	36,939	2,362	3,917	1,117	44,335	1	31.3%	145.2	120.6
Cervix	C53	2,221	156	282	67	2,726	12	1.9%	8.9	8.0
Colorectal	C18-C21	13,448	917	1,640	447	16,452	2	11.6%	53.9	35.5
Colon	C18	8,878	625	1,128	298	10,929	..	7.7%	35.8	23.0
Rectum	C19-C21	4,570	292	512	149	5,523	..	3.9%	18.1	12.4
Eye	C69	179	19	24	5	227	29	0.2%	0.7	0.6
Gallbladder	C23	335	17	48	12	412	23	0.3%	1.3	1.0
Hodgkin's disease	C81	560	27	71	17	675	22	0.5%	2.2	2.2
Kaposi's sarcoma	C46	13	0	0	0	13	31	0.0%	0.0	0.0
Kidney	C64-C66 + C68	2,178	168	271	79	2,696	14	1.9%	8.8	6.5
Larynx	C32	269	24	71	13	377	24	0.3%	1.2	1.0
Leukaemia	C91-C95	2,414	213	278	58	2,963	10	2.1%	9.7	7.1
Acute lymphoid leukaemia	C91.0	244	16	33	10	303	..	0.2%	1.0	1.1
Acute myeloid leukaemia	C92.0	832	72	99	28	1,031	..	0.7%	3.4	2.4
Chronic lymphoid leukaemia	C91.1	752	74	82	17	925	..	0.7%	3.0	1.9
Chronic myeloid leukaemia	C92.1	204	22	18	7	251	..	0.2%	0.8	0.6
Liver	C22	947	71	120	16	1,154	19	0.8%	3.8	2.5
Lung	C33-C34	12,354	943	2,160	361	15,818	3	11.2%	51.8	35.9
Malignant Melanoma	C43	4,056	244	478	146	4,924	6	3.5%	16.1	13.8
Mesothelioma	C45	300	10	26	5	341	26	0.2%	1.1	0.8
Multiple myeloma	C90	1,394	126	159	44	1,723	16	1.2%	5.6	3.8
Nasopharyngeal	C11	59	2	5	0	66	30	0.0%	0.2	0.2
Non-Hodgkin lymphoma	C82-C85 + C96	3,899	242	427	147	4,715	7	3.3%	15.4	11.4
Non-melanoma skin cancer	C44	27,333	1,261	3,574	1,069	33,237	..	..	108.8	73.8
Oesophagus	C15	2,171	155	336	49	2,711	13	1.9%	8.9	5.5
Oral	C00-C06+C09 +C10+C12-C14	1,299	81	200	40	1,620	17	1.1%	5.3	4.2
Lip	C00	72	5	10	4	91	..	0.1%	0.3	0.2
Mouth	C03-C06	431	22	50	10	513	..	0.4%	1.7	1.4
Tongue	C01-C02	468	29	85	19	601	..	0.4%	2.0	1.5
Oropharyngeal	C09-C10	194	14	30	4	242	..	0.2%	0.8	0.7
Ovary	C56-C57	5,408	370	628	209	6,615	4	4.7%	21.7	17.2
Pancreas	C25	3,181	228	304	82	3,795	8	2.7%	12.4	7.9
Salivary glands	C07-C08	201	13	16	8	238	28	0.2%	0.8	0.6
Small intestine	C17	302	22	30	7	361	25	0.3%	1.2	0.9
Stomach	C16	2,395	216	330	80	3,021	9	2.1%	9.9	6.1
Thyroid	C73	1,002	55	112	27	1,196	18	0.8%	3.9	3.6
Uterus	C54-C55	5,294	414	572	158	6,438	5	4.6%	21.1	16.8
Body of Uterus	C54	5,029	388	525	156	6,098	..	4.3%	20.0	16.0
Uterus unspecified	C55	265	26	47	2	340	..	0.2%	1.1	0.8
Vagina	C52	194	19	28	5	246	27	0.2%	0.8	0.6
Vulva	C51	832	75	89	26	1,022	20	0.7%	3.3	2.2
Population estimates (2004)		25,522,088	1,520,270	2,626,549	873,516	30,542,423				

Table Four: **PERSONS** - Number of new cases, percentage of all cancers diagnosed, UK rank and rate, by site and UK country, 2004

Cancer site	ICD10 code	Number of new cases registered in:					UK rank by crude rate	% of all malignant neoplasms excl NMSC	UK crude rate	UK DAS (E)* rate
		England	Wales	Scotland	Northern Ireland	UK				
All malignant neoplasms	C00-C97	293,253	19,618	34,816	9,305	356,992	..	..	597.1	459.6
All malignant neoplasms excl NMSC	C00-C97 excl C44	233,621	16,806	27,113	7,020	284,560	..	..	476.0	370.4
Bladder	C67	8,137	914	832	210	10,093	5	3.5%	16.9	11.8
Bone and Connective tissue	C40-C41, C47, C49	1,531	114	161	47	1,853	23	0.7%	3.1	2.7
<i>Bone</i>	C40-C41	374	33	35	17	459	..	0.2%	0.8	0.7
<i>Connective tissue</i>	C47, C49	1,157	81	126	30	1,394	..	0.5%	2.3	..
Brain with central nervous system	C70-C72	3,691	235	393	94	4,413	16	1.6%	7.4	6.5
<i>Brain</i>	C71	3,511	224	381	89	4,205	..	1.5%	7.0	6.1
Breast	C50	37,211	2,381	3,948	1,119	44,659	1	15.7%	74.7	63.7
Cervix	C53	2,221	156	282	67	2,726	19	1.0%	..	..
Colorectal	C18-C21	29,551	2,050	3,554	954	36,109	3	12.7%	60.4	44.3
<i>Colon</i>	C18	18,153	1,292	2,306	598	22,349	..	7.9%	37.4	26.8
<i>Rectum</i>	C19-C21	11,398	758	1,248	356	13,760	..	4.8%	23.0	17.5
Eye	C69	348	45	47	7	447	30	0.2%	0.7	0.7
Gallbladder	C23	474	23	61	14	572	28	0.2%	1.0	0.7
Hodgkin's disease	C81	1,257	72	150	40	1,519	25	0.5%	2.5	2.5
Kaposi's sarcoma	C46	89	3	5	0	97	34	0.0%	0.2	0.2
Kidney	C64-C66 + C68	5,745	435	677	187	7,044	11	2.5%	11.8	9.4
Larynx	C32	1,693	115	305	53	2,166	21	0.8%	3.6	3.0
Leukaemia	C91-C95	5,720	498	635	145	6,998	12	2.5%	11.7	9.3
<i>Acute lymphoid leukaemia</i>	C91.0	563	40	66	20	689	..	0.2%	1.2	1.3
<i>Acute myeloid leukaemia</i>	C92.0	1,839	161	211	59	2,270	..	0.8%	3.8	2.9
<i>Chronic lymphoid leukaemia</i>	C91.1	1,961	206	216	46	2,429	..	0.9%	4.1	2.9
<i>Chronic myeloid leukaemia</i>	C92.1	461	31	40	15	547	..	0.2%	0.9	0.7
Liver	C22	2,332	169	320	46	2,867	18	1.0%	4.8	3.6
Lung	C33-C34	30,459	2,256	4,666	932	38,313	2	13.5%	64.1	47.6
Malignant Melanoma	C43	7,363	451	867	258	8,939	7	3.1%	15.0	13.0
Mesothelioma	C45	1,834	87	200	46	2,167	20	0.8%	3.6	2.7
Multiple myeloma	C90	3,085	268	333	102	3,788	17	1.3%	6.3	4.7
Nasopharyngeal	C11	187	6	14	10	217	33	0.1%	0.4	0.3
Non-Hodgkin lymphoma	C82-C85 + C96	8,316	525	880	282	10,003	6	3.5%	16.7	13.4
Non-melanoma skin cancer	C44	59,632	2,812	7,703	2,285	72,432	..	25.5%	121.1	89.2
Oesophagus	C15	6,218	409	872	155	7,654	9	2.7%	12.8	9.5
Oral	C00-C06+C09 +C10+C12-C14	3,740	270	630	129	4,769	15	1.7%	8.0	6.9
<i>Lip</i>	C00	204	22	42	16	284	..	0.1%	0.5	0.3
<i>Tongue</i>	C01-C02	1,126	81	159	36	1,402	..	0.5%	2.3	2.1
<i>Mouth</i>	C03-C06	1,156	77	228	44	1,505	..	0.5%	2.5	2.1
<i>Oropharyngeal</i>	C09-C10	727	51	98	15	891	..	0.3%	1.5	1.4
Ovary	C56-C57	5,408	370	628	209	6,615	13	2.3%	..	..
Pancreas	C25	6,220	435	590	153	7,398	10	2.6%	12.4	9.0
Penis	C60	331	21	45	21	418	31	0.1%	..	..
Prostate	C61	29,406	2,273	2,550	757	34,986	4	12.3%	..	..
Salivary glands	C07-C08	461	32	38	14	545	29	0.2%	0.9	0.7
Small intestine	C17	669	48	70	24	811	27	0.3%	1.4	1.1
Stomach	C16	6,605	525	845	203	8,178	8	2.9%	13.7	9.7
Testis	C62	1,616	95	178	69	1,958	22	0.7%	..	..
Thyroid	C73	1,375	80	153	33	1,641	24	0.6%	2.7	2.5
Uterus	C54-C55	5,294	414	572	158	6,438	14	2.3%	..	..
<i>Body of Uterus</i>	C54	5,029	388	525	156	6,098	..	2.1%	..	..
<i>Uterus unspecified</i>	C55	265	26	47	2	340	..	0.1%	..	..
Vagina	C52	194	19	28	5	246	32	0.1%	..	..
Vulva	C51	832	75	89	26	1,022	26	0.4%	..	..
Population estimates (2004)		50,056,896	2,955,142	5,065,278	1,710,064	59,787,380				