

Cancer in men

**Reducing
incidence and mortality**

**MEN'S
HEALTH
FORUM**

**Cancer in men
Reducing
incidence and mortality**

- **Cancer in men: incidence and mortality**
- **Why do men have higher cancer rates than women?**
- **How can we reduce incidence and mortality in men?**



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Cancer incidence in men: incidence and mortality

Figure 1: Most Common Cancers in Men

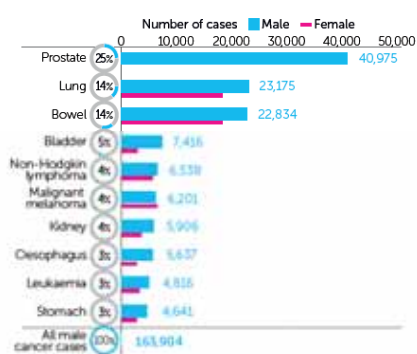
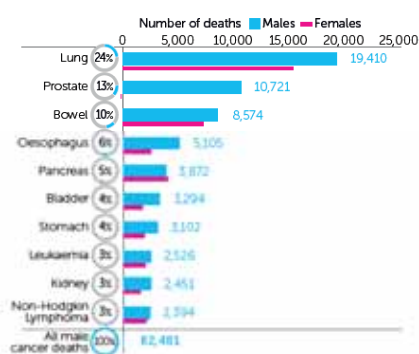
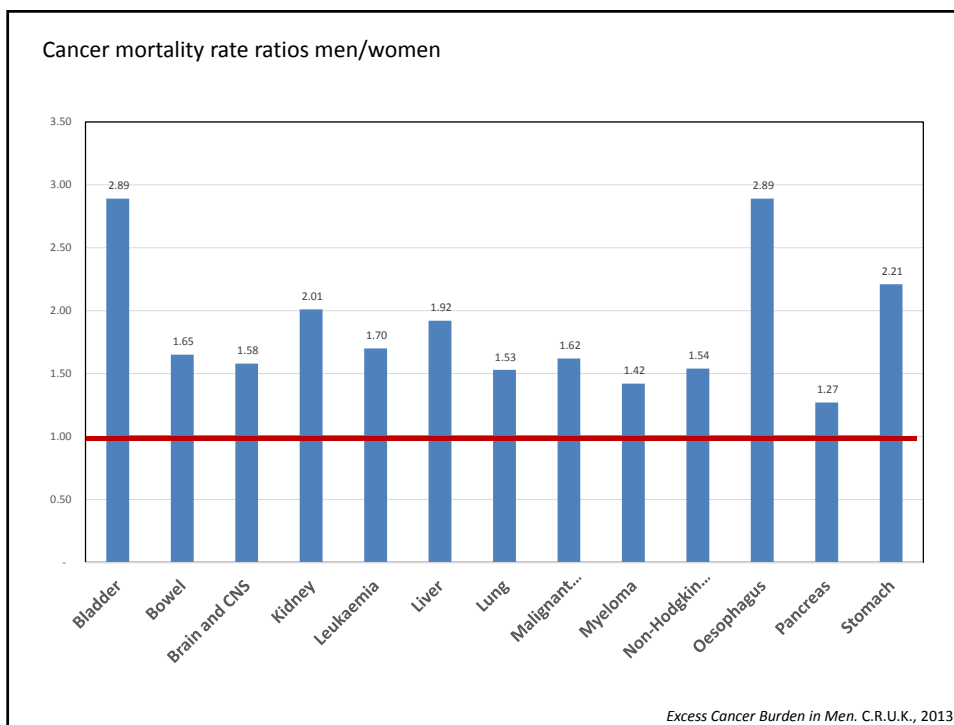
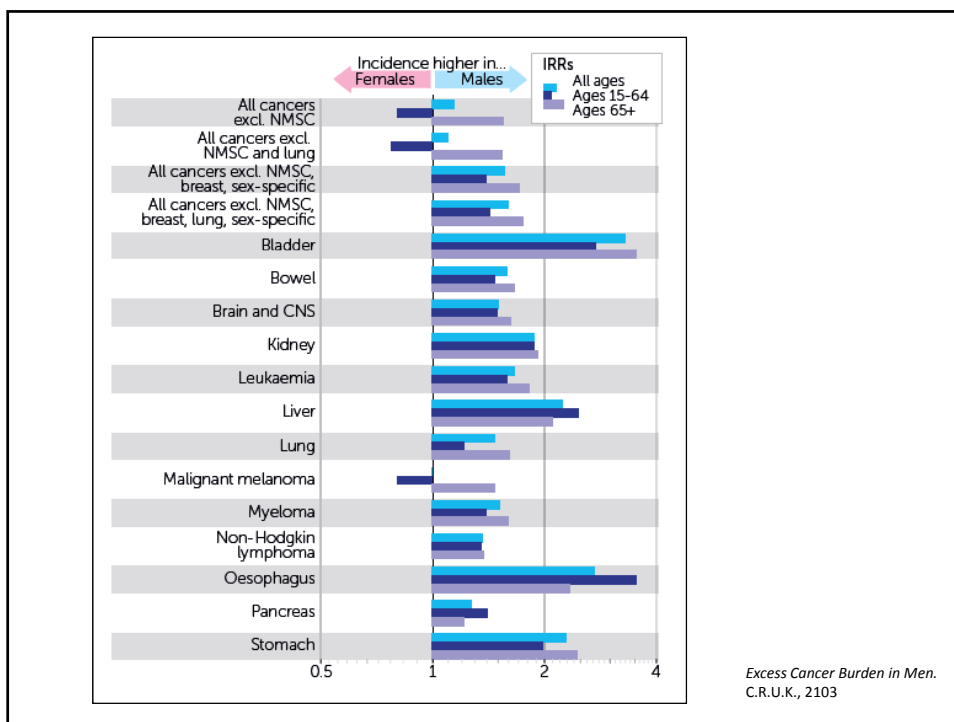



Figure 2: Most Common Causes of Male Cancer Death



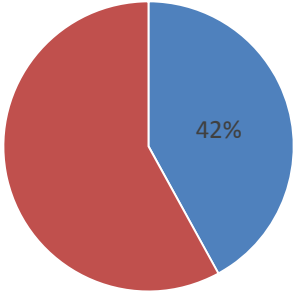
Excess Cancer Burden in Men.
 C.R.U.K., 2103





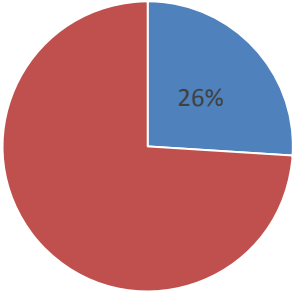
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Male deaths under 75
(all causes)



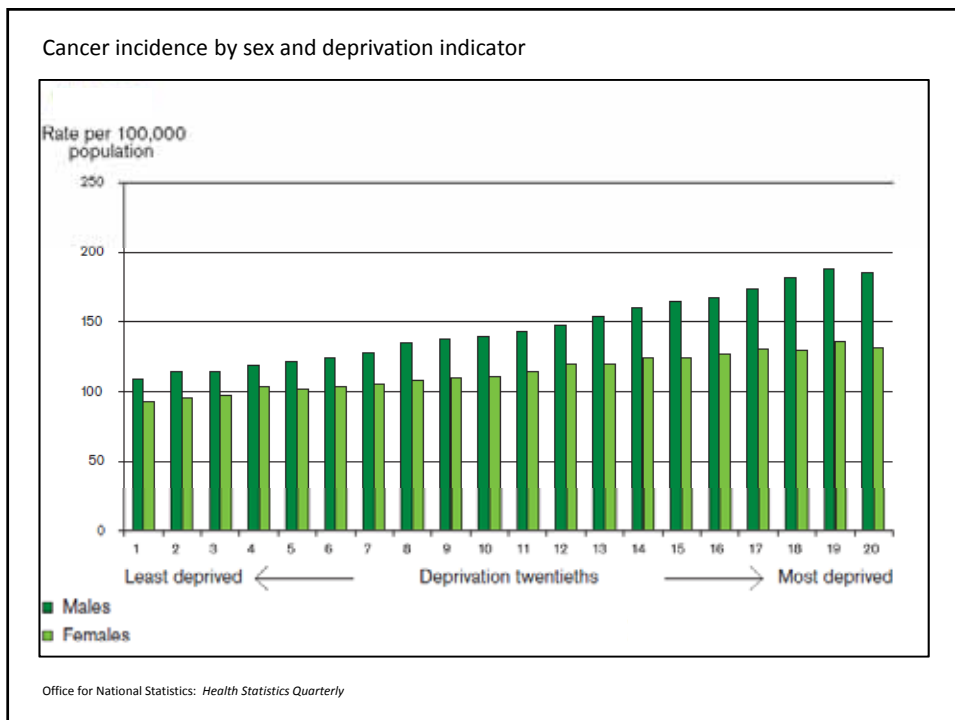
42%


Female deaths under 75
(all causes)



26%


Reducing premature deaths is an *NHS Outcomes Framework* indicator





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Why do men have higher cancer rates than women?



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Why do men have higher cancer rates than women?

The cause(s) of around 35% of cancers that occur in the population remain unidentified.

This inevitably limits our understanding of gender difference in incidence rates.

Men and Cancer: Saving Lives. Men's Health Forum 2013



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Why do men have higher cancer rates than women?
Biological explanations

There are no well established biological explanations for higher cancer rates in men. There are some hypotheses but at the moment, these have the potential only to offer marginal explanations:

- Female sex hormones may be protective against some cancers to some extent
- Women may derive some protection from their more vigorous immune systems
- Men may be more susceptible to oxidative damage to body cells

Note that some biological factors point tentatively towards the possibility of higher cancer rates in women.

Men and Cancer: Saving Lives. Men's Health Forum 2013



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Why do men have higher cancer rates than women?
Lifestyle-related explanations

Most plausible explanations of higher male rates of cancer are related to gender differences in lifestyles – although there is no data quantifying the extent to which these differences explain gender differences in incidence

- Historically, men have had higher smoking rates.
- Obesity rates are roughly equal between men and women (around 25%) but men are more likely to be overweight (66% v 57%). Men are less interested in losing weight.
- Men have poorer diets than women, are less well informed about nutrition.



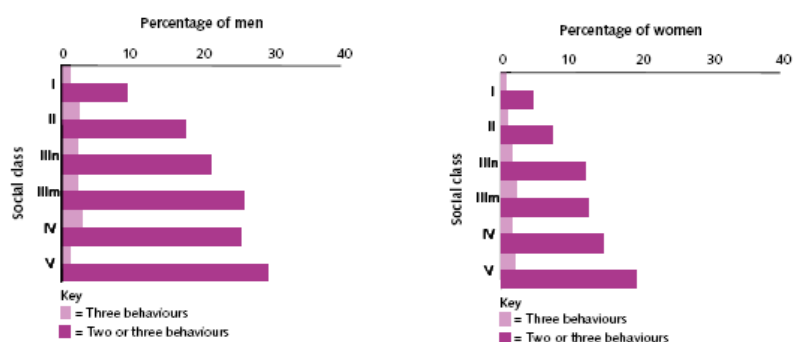
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Why do men have higher cancer rates than women? Lifestyle-related explanations

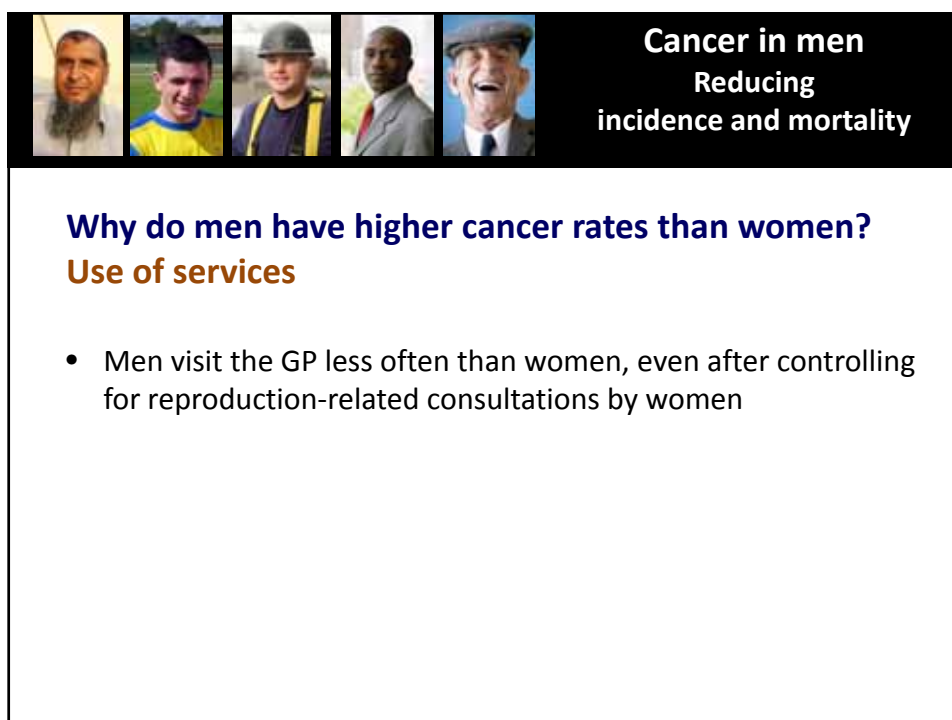
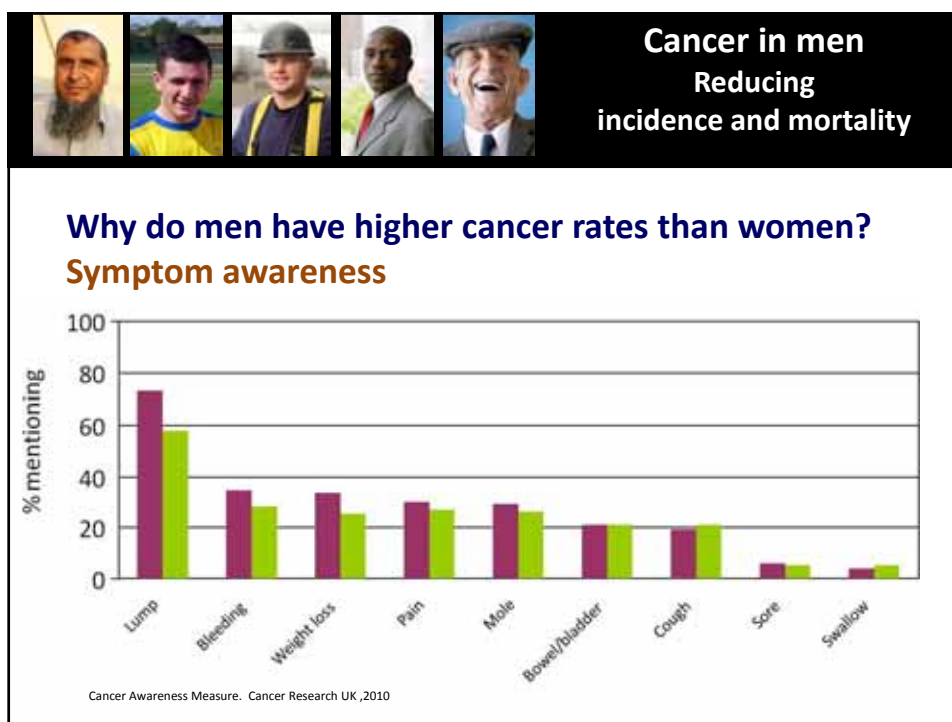
- Men are more likely to drink alcohol to excess (38% v 16%)
 - Men are more likely to suffer work-related exposure to carcinogens
- ***
- Men are more physically active than women but both sexes have low rates of physical activity overall

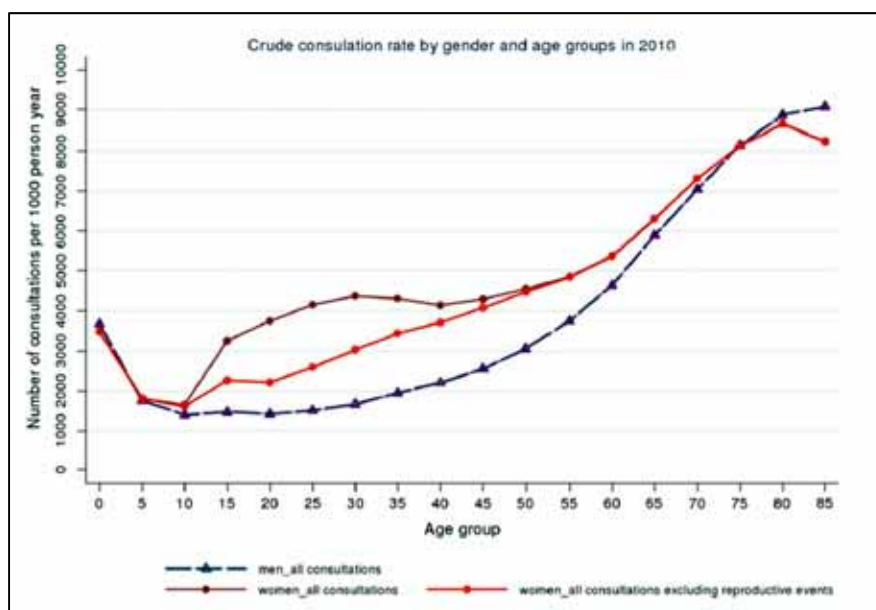
Why do men have higher cancer rates than women? Lifestyle-related explanations

Percentages of men and women exhibiting 2/3 or 3/3 risk behaviours, by social class (smoking, harmful levels of alcohol consumption, poor diet)



Dept. Of Health. Health Survey for England 2003





Do men consult less than women? An analysis of routinely collected UK general practice data
Wang Y, Hunt K, Nazareth I, Freemantle N, and Petersen I. *BMJ*, 2013



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Once diagnosed, men and women visit the GP with roughly equal frequency



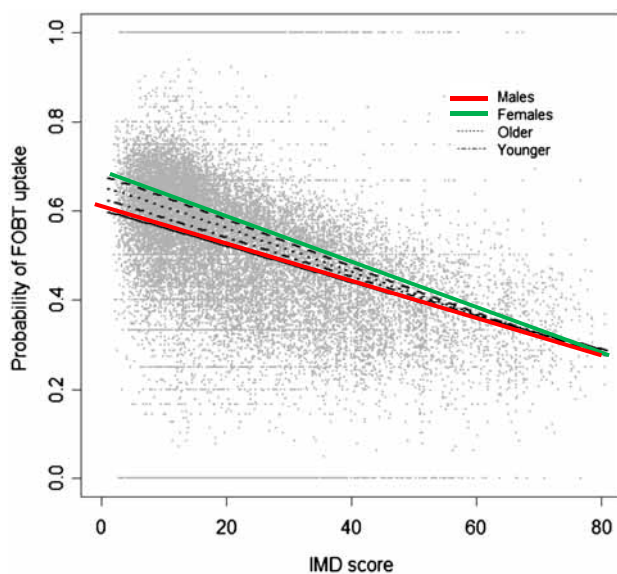
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Why do men have higher cancer rates than women?

Use of services

- Men are less likely to take up the offer of screening for bowel cancer (56% v 51%), even though men are 60% more likely to develop bowel cancer

Uptake by area-level deprivation gradient (grey dots represent individual postcode sectors stratified by age and gender) with separate regression lines for gender and age groups.



von Wagner C et al. Int. J. Epidemiol. 2011;ije.dyr008
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Epidemiology



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How can we reduce cancer incidence in men?






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How can we reduce cancer incidence in men?


- Develop male-specific interventions to tackle the link between being male and having a poorer lifestyle.
- Concentrate particularly on men of lower economic status. More interventions in deprived areas in general might particularly benefit men.
- Develop male-specific symptom awareness campaigns



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How can we reduce cancer incidence in men?

- Try out some of the approaches that we think may be effective with men:
 - “Permission” or “legitimation”
 - Directive information
 - Workplace-based interventions
 - Opportunistic interventions aimed at men
 - Phone or e-mail consultations
- Help boys to develop help-seeking skills



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How can we reduce cancer incidence in men?

We need more and better research:


- To reduce the percentage of cancers that currently have no known cause

and

- To quantify the proportion of the gender difference that can currently be explained by known causes

and


- To better understand how to develop public health interventions that are effective with men.



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How can we reduce cancer incidence in men?

- Challenge the implementation of policy: e.g. equality legislation; Outcomes Frameworks indicators.



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How can we reduce cancer incidence in men?

- Challenge the implementation of policy: e.g. equality legislation; Outcomes Frameworks indicators.

“It will be important to make sure that the gender differences [in life expectancy] do not lead to perverse incentives to focus services more on men.”

From the Equality Analysis
of the *Public Health Outcomes Framework*



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