

The Incidence of Female Breast Cancer in South Australia by Country of Birth

International perspective

Is breast cancer more common in Australia than in other countries?

Data from 153 cancer registries around the world in 1990 show that:

- North America and Northern Europe had the highest rates of breast cancer while Asia and Africa had the lowest rates.
- Australia and New Zealand had comparatively high rates, similar to those of the UK, Ireland and Northern Europe (see figure 1).

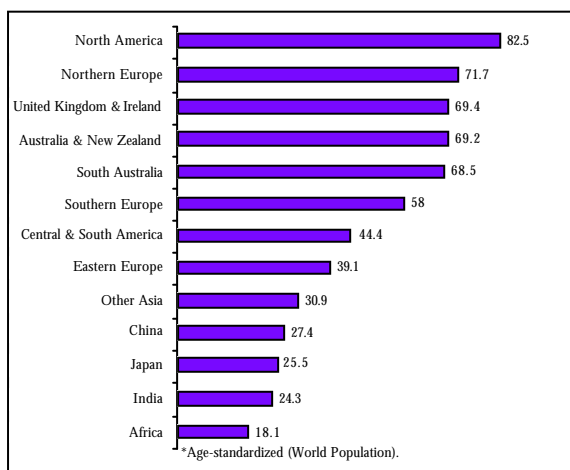


Figure 1 Annual incidence of female breast cancer per 100,000 circa 1990

Incidence in South Australia by country of birth

Do women from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) groups in South Australia have a higher or lower incidence of breast cancer?

- In 1977-2000, Australian-born women living in South Australia had an incidence of breast cancer about 10% higher than South Australian women born overseas.

- South Australian women born in the UK/Ireland had a 5% higher incidence than Australian-born women.
- Lower incidence figures applied to women born in Germany, Eastern Europe and Southern Europe.

Australia	10,568	(70.4%)
UK and Ireland	2,493	(16.6%)
Italy	375	(2.5%)
Germany	223	(1.5%)
Holland	190	(1.3%)
Greece	159	(1.1%)
Former Yugoslav states	110	(0.7%)
Poland	87	(0.6%)
New Zealand	78	(0.5%)
India	56	(0.4%)
Other	671	(4.5%)

Places of birth of South Australian women with breast cancer, 1977-2000

Is there a difference between the incidence of breast cancer among CALD women in South Australia and that in their country of birth?

- Overseas-born women in South Australia have had an incidence of breast cancer 15% higher than women in their parent populations.
- Only women from Germany and Southern Europe have shown a higher incidence in their country of birth.
- It appears that migration to Australia and the adoption of its lifestyle may be associated with an increased risk of breast cancer for CALD women.

Early detection

Are tumours detected later among women from CALD backgrounds in South Australia?

- ✓ Yes. In 1997-1999, small cancers (under 15mm diameter) represented 37% of cancers in women who came from countries where the main language was English. This compared with 26% of women with this disease who came from countries with languages other than English.
- ✓ A trend suggests that the smaller tumours were a higher proportion of the cancers found in women born in Australia, Northern Europe and the United Kingdom, and a lower proportion of those in women from Southern and Eastern Europe, Asia and the Middle East.
- ✓ Screening with mammography has increased the number of tumours detected when small.

Screening mammography at BreastScreen SA (BSSA)

Improving screening participation by CALD women aged 50 to 69 - How can GPs assist?

- ✓ **display** BSSA's range of free printed resources. Brochures are available in 16 languages.
- ✓ **tag** the files of your female patients over age 50 with BSSA's stickers as a reminder to discuss screening during a consultation.
- ✓ **learn** more about breast screening - attend a GP seminar at BSSA.
- ✓ **undertake** the Clinical Audit Activity developed by BSSA's Medical Officers.
- ✓ **include** an article on BSSA and screening in your practice newsletters.
- ✓ **encourage** your staff to promote screening to eligible women.
- ✓ **organise** an appointment for eligible women - phone 13 20 50. Free interpreter services are available on the phone and at the screening and assessment clinics.

For clinical enquiries, contact BSSA's Medical Officers:

BreastScreen SA
1 Goodwood Road
WAYVILLE SA 5034
Phone: (08) 8274 7150
Fax: (08) 8357 8146

BreastScreen SA website:
www.breastscreen.sa.gov.au

BreastScreen SA email:
info@breastscreen.sa.gov.au

For free resources and further information about screening for CALD women contact:

Ms Jelena Poljak-Fligic
CALD Project Officer
The Cancer Council South Australia
PO Box 929
UNLEY SA 5061
Phone: (08) 8291 4168
Fax: (08) 8291 4268

The Cancer Council South Australia website:
www.cancersa.org.au

The Cancer Council South Australia email:
tcc@cancersa.org.au

The South Australian cancer data presented in this fact sheet were extracted from annual reports published by the SA Cancer Registry, plus a supplementary data output from the Department of Human Services, for the 1977-2000 period. We also acknowledge the contribution of Associate Professor David Roder, Centre for Cancer Control Research, The Cancer Council South Australia.



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