

## REGIONAL ESTIMATES OF ALL CANCER MALIGNANCIES IN ITALY

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**Aims and background:** The aim of this paper is to present regional and national estimates of mortality, incidence and prevalence for all cancers in Italy over the period 1970-1999, with projections up to 2010.

**Methods:** The estimates were obtained by applying the MIAMOD method, a statistical back-calculation approach, to derive incidence and prevalence starting from mortality and relative survival data. Published data from the Italian Cancer Registries were modeled in order to estimate regional and national cancer survival.

**Results:** Cancer time trends resulted more favorable in northern-central regions than in southern regions, both for men and women. Mortality started to decrease in the northern-central area approximately from the mid 1980s, whereas it was expect-

ed to slightly decline only after the year 2000 in the southern area. Incidence was estimated to decrease in men from 1995 in northern and central areas only; no incidence reduction is expected for women during the study period. Overall, 130,000 cancer deaths, 250,000 new cancer cases and 1,700,000 prevalent cancer cases are estimated in Italy in the year 2005.

**Conclusions:** This up-to-date picture of cancer risk and burden in the Italian regions shows as a relevant epidemiological change is ongoing in Italy. Although a clear geographical variability in mortality and morbidity levels still exists across the country, the historical North-to-South gap appears smaller than in the past. This change is particularly remarkable for men, as a consequence of trends that are favorable in northern-central regions but not yet in southern regions.

**Key words:** incidence, mortality, neoplasm, population surveillance, prevalence, regional medical programs, registries, regression analysis.

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