

St. Joseph Hospital 2007 Cancer Statistics

CHART 1 shows the number of new malignancies diagnosed and/or treated at St. Joseph Hospital for 1997 to 2007. The hospital pathology department reviews almost all pathology in Whatcom County. Hence for the last several years nearly all pathology from Whatcom County is accessioned into the registry, and is likely a true reflection of the incidence of cancer in this county. Of the 1215 new cases (an 11% increase from the previous year) diagnosed, 224 cases were diagnosed and treated in the physician office only. Most other hospitals and communities only report hospital cases. Hence our results are more accurate and may explain some of the differences in our results. Four of the top five cases of cancer remain essentially the same throughout the 10-year period.

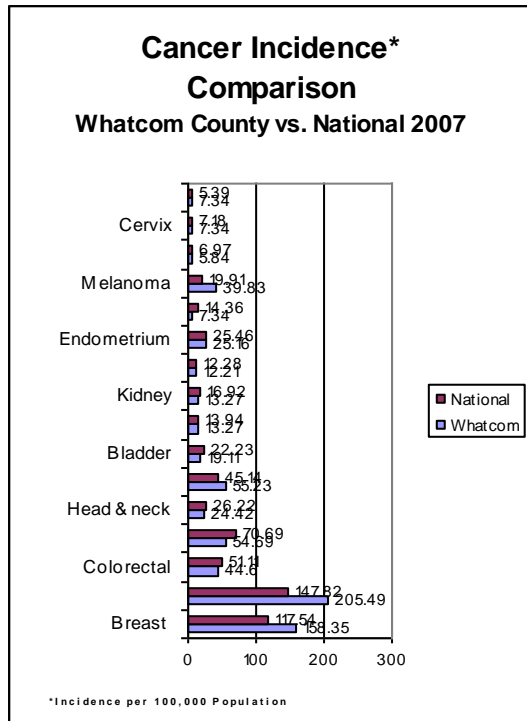
Cancers by Site, St. Joseph Hospital											
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
bladder	31	43	49	33	43	52	46	48	52	30	36
brain/CNS[^]	10	10	11	13	7	16	10	10	14	16	15
breast*	129	143	145	148	161	147	167	163	191	190	206
cervix (invasive)	5	11	3	7	4	7	5	5	9	7	7
colon & rectum	75	87	68	74	71	57	97	84	88	95	94
endometrium	21	27	22	24	23	23	27	28	23	23	25
head & neck	39	38	31	32	37	41	47	41	50	51	58
kidney	14	22	16	18	24	26	24	22	25	26	28
lung	78	91	74	87	96	108	106	114	116	128	110
lymph/myel/leuk	50	47	60	67	70	65	80	73	94	75	112
ovary	12	16	6	15	10	10	12	13	19	6	7
pancreas	13	11	11	8	19	12	9	20	21	19	28
prostate	115	146	158	170	179	217	196	177	175	184	216
testicular	6	5	5	2	3	10	5	10	7	10	7
melanoma*	50	61	71	72	78	85	96	119	98	120	128
upper GI	14	30	27	18	26	24	33	24	27	30	27
other	21	31	39	36	46	42	40	57	53	50	96
unknown	19	9	9	16	9	11	7	28	17	19	15
TOTAL	702	828	805	840	906	953	1007	1036	1079	1079	1215

*these numbers include in situ cases which are not reported on national statistics

[^]excluding benign brain (required to collect starting 2004) 24 dx in 2007

(above is Chart 1)

CHART and GRAPH 2 compare Whatcom County cancer incidence with age adjusted national estimates. Over the years, there appears to be an increased incidence of cancer in Whatcom County compared to nationally for breast, bladder, melanoma, lymphomas, ovary, and prostate cancer. This finding has been fairly consistent from year to year. This year, there is a local increase for prostate and melanoma, lymphoma and leukemia, and Breast. Breast cancer incidence is elevated this year, but not much different than the past two years. Many breast patients are completely treated outside the hospital these days, and our increased numbers most likely represent capturing that out-patient group. Since the 2005 national incidence are estimates, and, most likely, any differences are due to random sampling, and the completeness of our registry.



Cancer Incidence* Comparison Whatcom County vs. National 2007

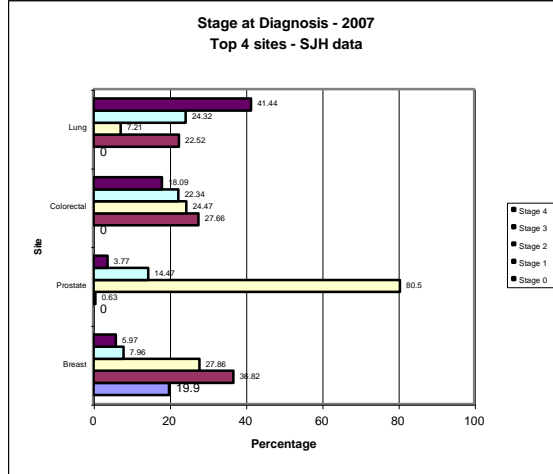
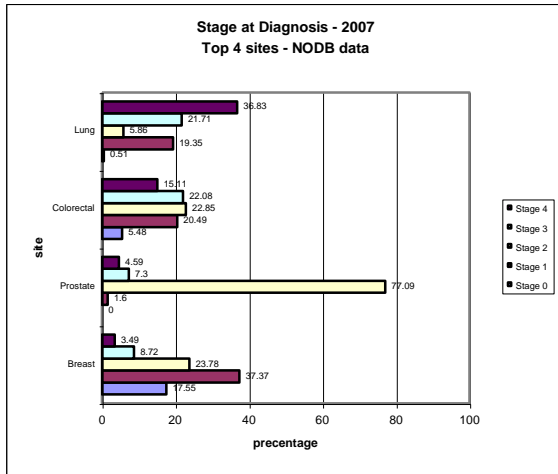
	Whatcom	National
Breast	158.35	117.54
Prostate	205.49	147.82
Colorectal	44.6	51.11
Lung	54.69	70.69
Head & neck	24.42	26.22
Lymph/mye/leuk	55.23	45.14
Bladder	19.11	22.23
Upper GI	13.27	13.94
Kidney	13.27	16.92
Pancreas	12.21	12.28
Endometrium	25.16	25.46
Ovary	7.34	14.36
Melanoma	39.83	19.91
Brain/CNS	5.84	6.97
Cervix	7.34	7.18
Testicular	7.34	5.39

*Incidence Per 100,000 Population

Once again the incidence in Whatcom County of prostate cancer is higher in our community; showing a fairly slow, fairly stable increase over the past several years. However, Prostate cancer incidence is noticeably lower than the late 1980's. The increased numbers are most likely explained by the use of prostate screening in the community; however screening in being performed somewhat less often and this observation may be reflected by the decreased incidence in our community as compared to the 1980s.

The increase in melanoma is difficult to evaluate. An in-depth evaluation was performed on Melanoma this year, which supported an impression, offered by FHCRC and Washington State epidemiology that the increase was possibly associated with having Western Washington University students in the community. The larger number of young people who actually do not live here full time could be affecting the numbers. Again, our Registry does include patients who are diagnosed and treated outside of the hospital, so this might result in an increase number. The State however requires all cancer cases to be reported, so county wide data ought to be accurate.

CHARTS 3 & 4 look at the stages of cancer diagnosed in Whatcom County as compared to the National Oncology Data Base. This is the second time we have used national numbers from the NODB data bank for comparisons. Regional (Greater Puget Sound) numbers are no longer readily available, but this comparison gives a far broader perspective on our performance. It appears that for breast, prostate, lung and colon cancer, the stage at which the cancer was diagnosed at St. Joseph Hospital is essentially equivalent (accounting for small sample size) to the national numbers.



In summary, Whatcom County 2007 cancer statistics are, once again consistent with previous years. Because of the excellent reporting of cancer in our community, our numbers reflect a more accurate reflection than the national data. Paradoxically, this makes comparison of results more difficult. It is reassuring to document that our detection and screening programs result in preventing patients “falling through the cracks” and being diagnosed at later stages of disease.