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Burden of testicular, paratesticular and extragonadal germ cell tumours in Europe

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ABSTRACT

We provide updated estimates of survival, incidence, complete prevalence, and proportion cured for patients with testicular/paratesticular and extragonadal germ cell cancers in Europe, grouped according to the new list of cancer types developed by RARECARE. We collected data, archived in European cancer registries, with vital status information available to 31st December 2003.

We analysed 26,000 cases of testicular, paratesticular and extragonadal germ cell cancers diagnosed 1995–2002, estimating that about 15,600 new testicular/paratesticular and 630 new extragonadal cancer cases occurred per year in EU27, with annual incidence rates of 31.5/1,000,000 and 1.27/1,000,000, respectively. Slightly more than 436,000 persons were alive at the beginning of 2008 with a diagnosis of testicular/paratesticular cancer, and about 17,000 with a diagnosis of extragonadal germ cell cancer.

Five-year relative survival was 96% for testicular/paratesticular cancer and 71% for extragonadal germ cell cancer; the proportions cured were 95% and 69%, respectively. We found limited variation in survival between European regions except for non-seminomatous testicular cancer, for which five-year relative survival ranged from 86% in Eastern Europe to 96% in Northern Europe. Survival for all cancer types considered decreased with increasing age at diagnosis.

Further investigation is required to establish the real reasons for the lower survival in Eastern Europe. Considering the high prevalence of these highly curable cancers, it is important to monitor patients long-term, so as to quantify treatment-related risks and develop treatments having limited impact on quality of life.

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