Statistics—melanoma

South Australia 2007 figures	males	females	persons
number of cases	337	280	617
number of deaths	55	35	90
incidence/100,000 (ASR* Aust 2001 population)	39.5	30.3	34.2
mortality/100,000 (ASR* Aust 2001 population)	6.4	3.4	4.7
risk of developing cancer (by age 75 years)	1 in 35	1 in 43	1 in 39

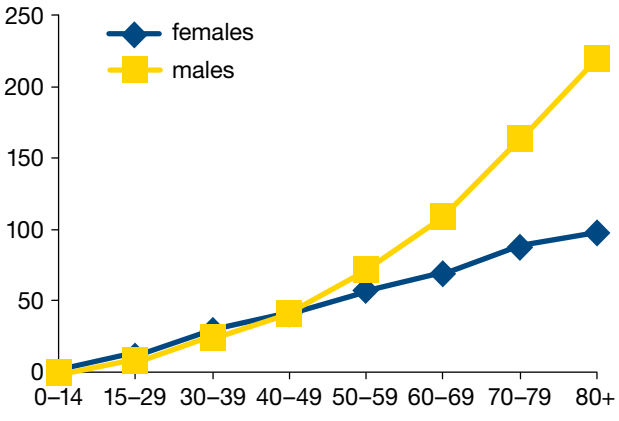
*ASR – Age Standardised Rate

Patterns in incidence and mortality

Age

The incidence of melanoma increases with age. This increase is more evident for males than females. While the highest rates are among those age 80 years or older, melanoma is the most common cancer among younger people (aged 15–40 years).

Age specific incidence of melanoma (annual average rate/100,000, SA 1998–2007)



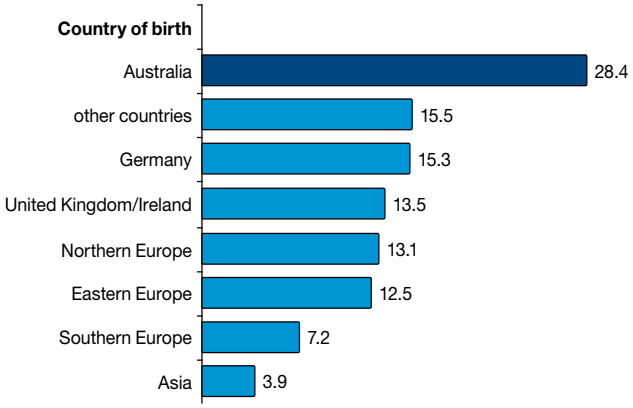
Gender

Among South Australians under 40 years of age the incidence of melanoma is slightly higher for females compared with males. From the age of 50 years onwards incidence rates are higher for men than women.

Country of birth

Within South Australia overseas born residents had an incidence about 60% lower than the Australian born during 1977–2000. Residents born in Asia had the lowest incidence—about 86% lower than the Australian born. For residents born in Southern Europe, incidence was about 75% lower than for the Australian born. Darker skin colouring among these groups would have been a protective factor.

Melanoma incidence by country of birth (annual rate/100,000, SA 1977–2001, ASR World population)

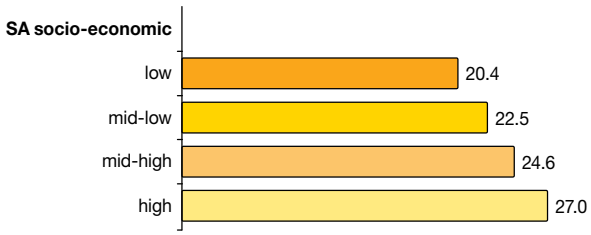


SES/region

As reported for other populations, 1977–2001 data show that South Australians residing in upper socio-economic areas had an elevated incidence of melanoma.

Males tended to have a higher incidence in Adelaide than in country regions in 1977–2001, whereas there was the suggestion of a reverse trend for females. Regions varied in incidence, both in Adelaide and the country. In Adelaide, the Southern Eastern regions had relatively high rates, whereas in the country, Kangaroo Island, Lincoln and the Fleurieu Peninsula had comparatively high rates.

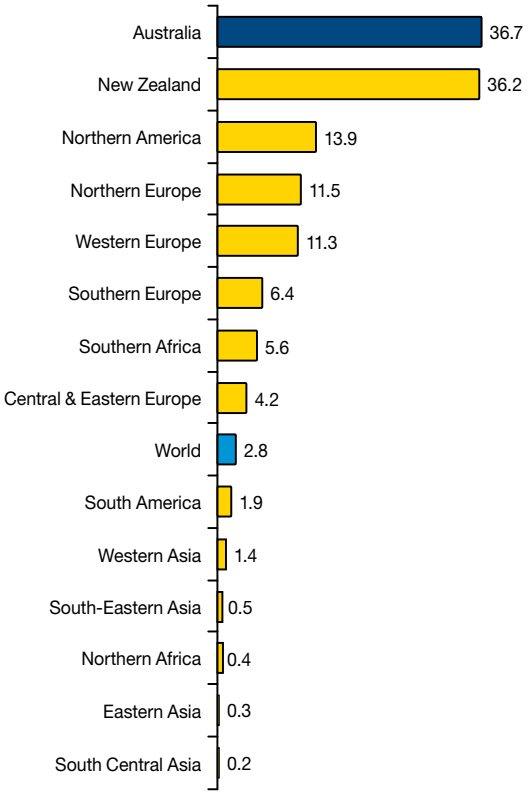
Melanoma incidence by SES (annual rate/ 100,000, SA 1977–2001, ASR World population)



Global comparisons

The incidence of melanoma varies by more than 100 fold around the world, with by far the highest rates in Australia and New Zealand. High rates in Australia are due to high proportion of UVR levels and the high proportion of fair skinned people among the Australian population.

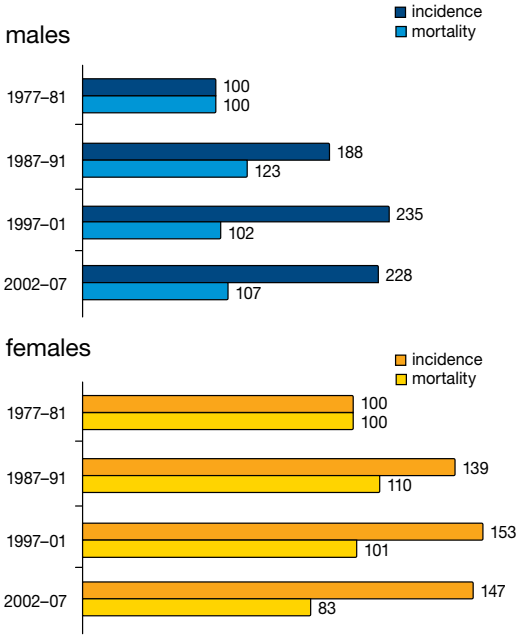
Melanoma incidence rate by regions of the world (rate/100,000 ASR World population Globocan 2008)



Trends

Incidence rates more than doubled in males between 1977–81 and 2002–2007, whereas a smaller increase of around 50% applied to females. In both sexes, incidence plateaued in the late 1990s. Mortality rates have not increased, despite incidence increases, probably due to gains in case survival from earlier diagnosis. Recent data suggests mortality decreases among female South Australians.

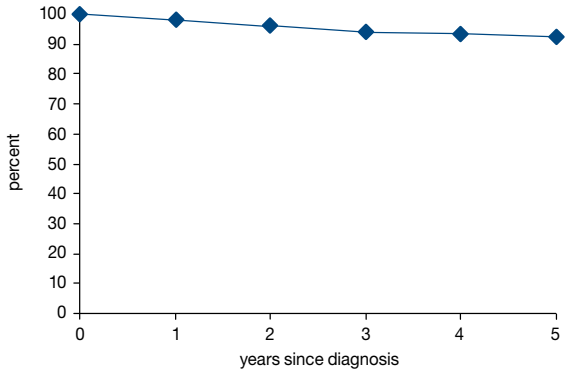
Trends in melanoma incidence and mortality in SA (rates for 1977–81 set at '100')



Survival

Survival outcomes from melanoma are very favourable with 92% of those diagnosed with melanoma between 1997 and 2003 surviving their disease for five years or more. This represents an improvement over the past two decades from a five year survival of 85% for those diagnosed between 1977 and 1981.

Survival from melanoma (SA, 1997–2003)



Risk factors

Risk factors include:

- a history of excess chronic sun exposure, which may include small quick bursts, particularly in people with a fair complexion and skin type that burns readily in the sun
- multiple and/or atypical moles
- living closer to the equator
- a personal or family history of melanoma.

Data sources:

- Cancer Registry reports, South Australian Department of Health
- Globocan 2008, IARC.

September 2010
next review due September 2011