

Ontario Cancer News



Ontario Breast Screening Program turns 15

Since the Ontario Breast Screening Program kicked off organized screening in Ontario 15 years ago, the program has provided more than 1.5 million screens to women aged 50 and over.

Between 1989 and 2002, breast cancer mortality rates in Ontario women aged 50 to 69 -- the target age group for the screening program -- decreased by 29%, in part due to increased participation in breast screening using mammography.

For more information, go to http://www.cancercare.on.ca/index_1461.htm.



New procedures for data requests now in effect

Cancer Care Ontario has implemented a new policy and revised procedures for the use and disclosure of data. These procedures replace the interim data access process that has been in place over the past few months.

Requesters will find the information on CCO's Web site; from the home page, click on [Request Data from CCO](#).

All requests for data will now be managed through a Data Access Coordinator (e-mail datarequest@cancercare.on.ca). By filtering requests through the data access coordinator, Cancer Care Ontario will be able to respond more quickly, and provide better, more consistent data. This also allows for better tracking and prioritizing of requests, reduced duplication of effort, and better management of time and resources, while ensuring that all requests are managed in a privacy-sensitive manner.

The Data Use and Disclosure Policy is part of CCO's overall Privacy Program, developed to ensure the organization fulfills its obligations under Ontario's Personal Health Information Protection Act. The Privacy Program ensures the security of personal health information within CCO's custody or control, and safeguards confidential information. (Find out more about CCO's privacy policies and information practices on the CCO Web site.)

- [PDF Data Use and Disclosure Policy](#)
- [CCO's Privacy Policies and information practices](#)



More cancer care, closer to home for Ontario patients

Several recent announcements have confirmed the Ontario government's commitment to the expansion of cancer services across the province. Four key construction projects have received the green light since August. As identified in the Ontario Cancer Plan, these developments will help bring cancer services in line with the projected needs for these regions over the next five to ten years.

A cancer centre with radiation therapy services will be part of the new **Sault Area Hospital**; construction is expected to begin in 2006/07. Premier Dalton McGuinty and Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal David Caplan announced the government's commitment to the project in August.

Southlake Regional Health Centre in Newmarket received approval to move forward with the development of a new cancer centre, as announced by Minister of Health and Long-Term Care George Smitherman on September 29. Construction on the cancer centre is slated to begin in 2006/07, and the regional cancer centre expected to open in 2008.

Also announced on September 29, by Minister of Public Infrastructure Renewal David Caplan, was Phase 1 of the **Royal Victoria Hospital** (Barrie) expansion project. The project includes development of the 73,000 square-foot Simcoe-Muskoka Regional Cancer Centre, with three radiation therapy suites. Located in one of the most underserved areas of the province for radiation therapy (as identified in the *Ontario Cancer Plan*), the Simcoe-Muskoka Regional Cancer Centre is expected to see 62,569 patient visits in its first year.

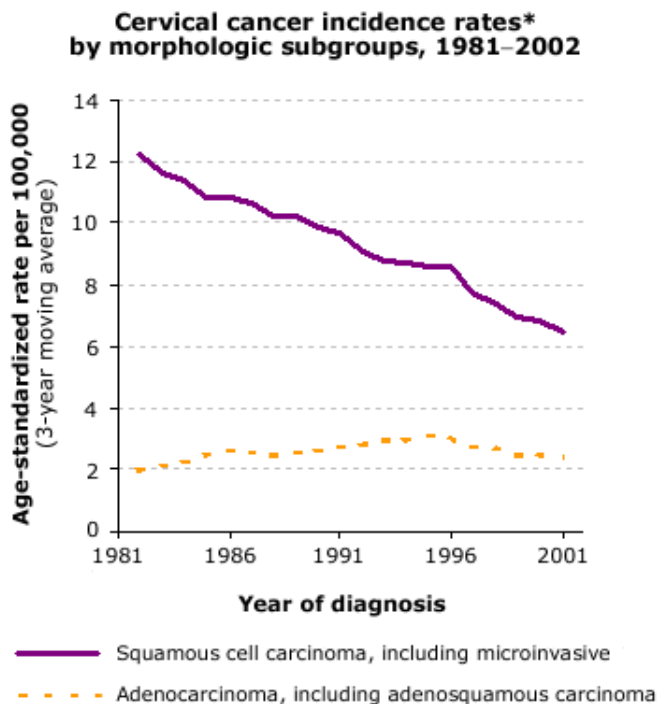
Construction of the **Niagara Health System's (NHS)** new health-care complex is expected to begin in 2006/07. The go-ahead was announced by Minister David Caplan on September 16. The health-care complex includes the development of a comprehensive cancer treatment centre to serve residents from across the Niagara Region. Hospital representatives hope to begin offering services to patients in the new facility by early 2010.

For more information about these and other cancer centre development projects, go to http://www.cancercare.on.ca/index_capitalProjects.htm.

Ontario Cancer Fact



Cervical cancer has two different cell types: squamous cell carcinoma (arising in thin, flat cells that cover the outer cervix) and adenocarcinoma (arising in glandular cells in the inner cervix). The squamous cell type is more common. Sexually transmitted infection with a high-risk (oncogenic) type of human papillomavirus (HPV) is the primary cause of cervical cancer. Smoking and high parity (especially with five or more full-term pregnancies) increase risk. Incidence fell for the squamous cell type of cervical cancer by 3% per year between 1981 and 2002. Adenocarcinoma incidence shows a different pattern — it rose 3% per year through to the mid 1990s and has since fallen by 4% per year.



Source: Cancer Care Ontario (Ontario Cancer Registry 2005)
* Calculated with hysterectomy-corrected population at risk

The decline in squamous cell carcinoma incidence is largely the result of many decades of Pap test screening. An apparently steeper drop in incidence during the mid-1990s coincides with information dissemination, quality assurance efforts and technological changes to improve Pap test screening in the province.

The rise and subsequent decline in adenocarcinoma incidence may reflect improvements in screening techniques — increasing awareness of this type of cervical cancer, and use of a brush as well as a spatula to collect cells for a Pap test — that led to improved detection and removal of these cancers and their precursors.

- Ontario guidelines for cervical screening, revised in June 2005, are available at <http://www.cancercare.on.ca/documents/CervicalScreeningGuidelines.pdf>.
- (For full background report, see http://www.cancercare.on.ca/pdf/pebc_cervical_screen.pdf).
- For more detailed information about cervical cancer in Ontario, look for the next issue of *Insight on Cancer*, available later this month at <http://www.cancercare.on.ca/>.
- For a *Cancer Fact* about HPV infections in Ontario women, see http://www.cancercare.on.ca/index_cancerFactsHPVinfections.htm.

The Ontario Cervical Screening Program recommends that women who have had sex should have regular Pap tests. For more information, talk to your health care provider, go to http://www.cancercare.on.ca/index_cervicalScreening.htm, or call one of the following:

- your local public health unit ([find a public health unit](#))
- the Canadian Cancer Society's Cancer Information Service (1-888-939-3333)
- the Ontario Cervical Screening Program (416-971-9800, ext. 1144)

People news



Dr. Philip Ellison has joined Cancer Care Ontario's Clinical Council as the liaison with the College of Family Physicians of Ontario. As a practicing family physician, and leader of the Family In-patient Service at the Toronto Western Hospital, Dr. Ellison brings a new perspective to the Council and will ensure a strong voice for primary care in Ontario's cancer system.

Dr. Ellison holds a Master of Business Administration from the Joseph L. Rotman School of Management, University of Toronto, where he is cross-appointed to the Department of Health Policy, Management, and Evaluation.

Cancer Care Ontario scientist **Dr. Susan Cole** and director of Research **Dr. Roger Deeley** have been awarded the 2005 Robert L. Noble Prize from the National Cancer Institute of Canada. The prize is given for outstanding achievements in cancer research. Drs. Cole and Deeley are internationally recognized for their contributions to the understanding of multi-drug resistance, one of the major causes of treatment failure for cancer patients.

More information about their research is available on the [Queen's Cancer Research Unit Web site](#). For more about the Robert L. Noble Prize, go to the [National Cancer Institute of Canada Web site](#).

New publications



Insight on Cancer: news and information on cervical cancer is the fifth in a series of publications developed by the Canadian Cancer Society (Ontario Division) and Cancer Care Ontario to provide the most current information on cancer and cancer risk factors in Ontario.

Highlights of the report include:

- Cervical cancer is the tenth most common cancer in Ontario females of all ages, but it is the second most common among women under 50 years
- Incidence and mortality rates declined between 1981 and 2002 in all age groups
- In 2002, incidence rates for squamous cell carcinoma, the most common form of cervical cancer, were about half what they were in 1981
- Incidence rates for adenocarcinoma (about 20% of cervical cancers) increased between 1981 and 1995 then declined annually thereafter until 2002
- Five-year survival has improved slightly since 1981, particularly for adenocarcinoma
- Screening with regular Pap tests is the most important determinant of the declines in incidence and mortality and the improvement in survival
- High-risk (oncogenic) human papillomavirus (HPV) is the primary causal factor in the development of cervical precancerous lesions and invasive cancer
- Risk factors that enhance the carcinogenic effect of HPV infection include smoking tobacco, having a high number of live births, and presence of other sexually transmitted infections (HIV, chlamydia, HSV-2)
- Although cervical cancer is almost entirely preventable with regular Pap test screening, only 81% of Ontario women have had a recent Pap test
- Screening is most effective if delivered through an organized program that includes a comprehensive information system. Action is urgently required in Ontario to overcome the barriers to creating such a system

Insight on Cancer will be posted soon on the [Cancer Care Ontario](#) and [Canadian Cancer Society](#) (Ontario Division) Web sites. For a hard copy, call the Canadian Cancer Society's Cancer Information Service at 1-888-939-3333.

Don't miss ***A Just Measure of Patience: Managing access to cancer services after Chaoulli***, a chapter in the recently released proceedings of the conference "Access to Care, Access to Justice: The Legal Debate over Private Health Insurance in Canada." Co-authored by CCO's President and CEO Dr. Terrence Sullivan, Anna Greenberg, Dr. Carol Sawka and Dr. Alan Hudson, the chapter is available on Cancer Care Ontario's Web site.

-  [A Just Measure of Patience: Managing access to cancer services after Chaoulli](#)

The full proceedings, *The Legal Debate over Private Health Insurance in Canada*, edited by Colleen M. Flood, Kent Roach, and Lorne Sossin, are available through the [University of Toronto Press bookstore](#).

Upcoming events



Free webcast of Life after breast cancer conference, October 26, 2005

Juravinski Cancer Centre presents "Life after breast cancer," a conference for those whose lives have been touched by breast cancer, on October 26 in Hamilton. Though the conference is sold out, those who cannot attend can sign up for a free webcast of the morning program. For more information, go to <http://www.hrcc.on.ca/labcc>, or call 905-387-9495, ext. 64951. To sign up for the free webcast, go to <http://www.medbroadcast.com> and select breast cancer.

CCO session at OHA HealthAchieve 2005, November 1, 2005

Cancer Care Ontario presents "Performance measurement, public reporting and improving the quality of cancer care" at this year's OHA conference, November 1 in Toronto. The half-day session will include talks by several of CCO's senior leaders, as well as a panel discussion focused on addressing challenges to improving quality and performance. For information or to register for the conference, go to <http://www.ohahealthachieve.com/>.

Ontario Prevention Clearinghouse 20th Anniversary conference, February 2006

The Ontario Prevention Clearinghouse hosts "Moving Upstream Together: Partnering for Ontario's future health and well-being," a conference and 20th Anniversary celebration, next February 21-22 at 89 Chestnut (formerly the Colony Hotel), Toronto.

A working conference intended to generate real change, the event will be of interest to those involved in health promotion, social services, child development, community or public health, poverty, housing, disease prevention, inclusion, policy, research and social advocacy.

For details on the conference program and speakers, go to: <http://www.opc.on.ca>.

Contact Us

All enquiries and article suggestions should be directed to:

Christine Naugler
Public Affairs
Cancer Care Ontario
620 University Avenue
Toronto, ON M5G 2L7
phone: (416) 971-5100 x 1605
fax: (416) 217-1249
e-mail: publicaffairs@cancercare.on.ca

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