

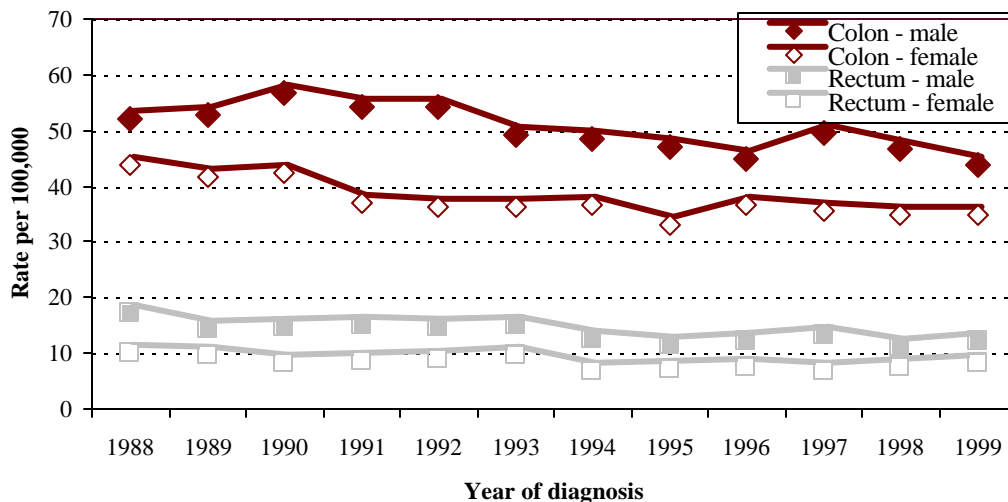


Colorectal Cancer in the San Francisco Bay Area 1988-1999

March 2002

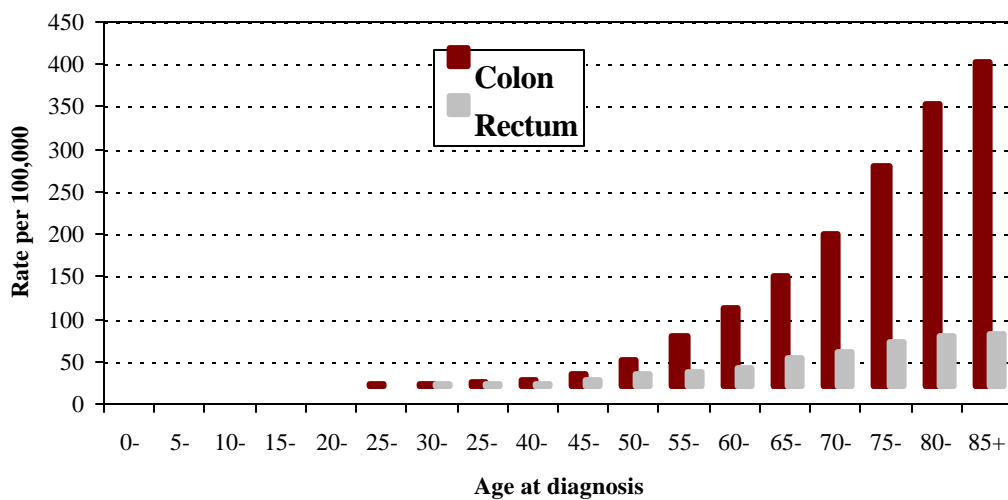
Between 1995 and 1999, more than 10,000 cases of colorectal cancer were newly diagnosed in San Francisco Bay Area residents. Of these cases, the majority (70%) are attributable to colon cancers, while the remaining are rectal cancers.

Figure 1. Age-adjusted incidence rates of invasive colon and rectal cancer, by sex and year of diagnosis, 1988-1999.



Although incidence rates for colon cancer declined slightly between 1988 and 1999, rates for rectal cancer did not change substantially. Rates for both colon and rectal cancer were consistently higher in males than in females (Figure 1, above).

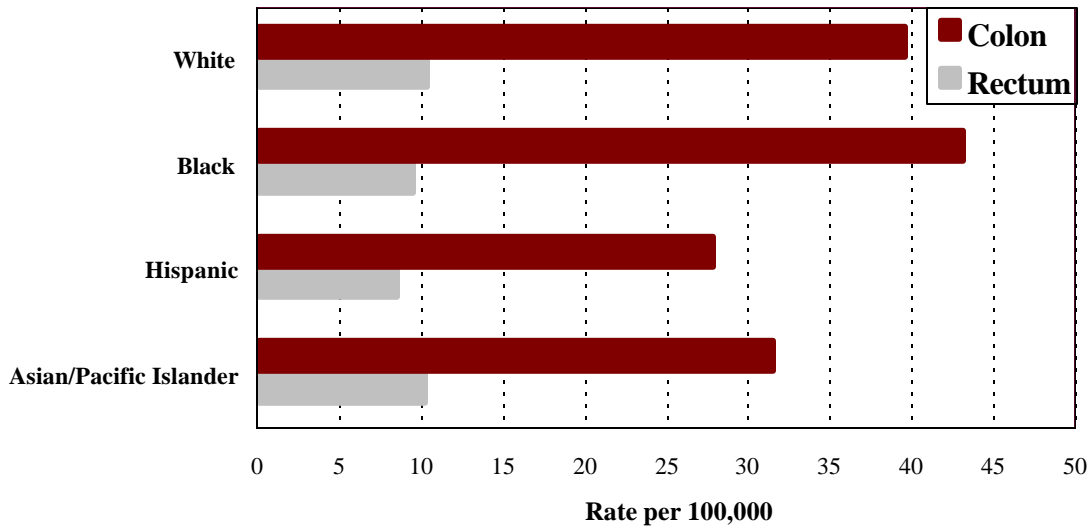
Figure 2. Average annual age-specific incidence rates of invasive colon and rectal cancer, by age at diagnosis, 1995-1999.



Although incidence of colorectal cancer is uncommon before age 45, rates increased steadily with age thereafter, with the highest incidence rates seen in the oldest age groups (Figure 2, above).

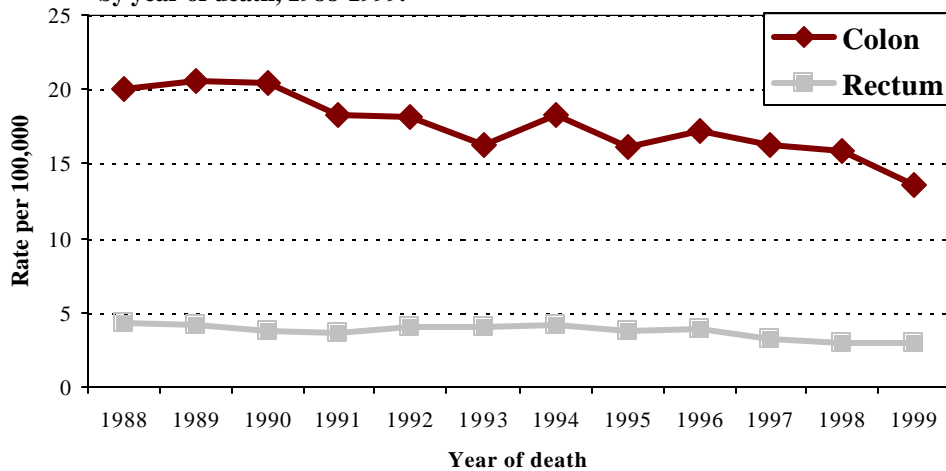


Figure 3. Average annual age-adjusted incidence rates of invasive colon and rectal cancer, by race/ethnicity, 1995-1999.



Blacks and whites were more likely to be diagnosed with colon cancer than Hispanics and Asians/Pacific Islanders. Incidence of rectal cancer did not vary substantially racial/ethnic group (Figure 3, above).

Figure 4. Age-adjusted mortality rates for invasive colon and rectal cancer, by year of death, 1988-1999.



Mortality rates for colon cancer have fallen between 1988 and 1999, but have remained essentially unchanged for rectal cancer (Figure 4, above).

Technical Notes: Because age distributions vary by population, a standard statistical procedure called “age-adjustment” was used so that we can examine differences in cancer incidence and mortality rates due to factors other than age. Rates are age-adjusted (using the Year 2000 population standard) unless noted to be age-specific. Race/ethnicity was categorized as four mutually-exclusive racial/ethnic groups: non-Hispanic whites (whites), non-Hispanic blacks (blacks), Hispanics, and non-Hispanic Asians/Pacific Islanders (Asians/Pacific Islanders).

About the data: Cancer data have been collected in Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, San Francisco, and San Mateo counties since 1973, and in Monterey, San Benito, Santa Clara, and Santa Cruz counties since 1988, forming two parts (Regions 1 and 8) of the California Cancer Registry. These counties, referred to as the Greater Bay Area are also part of the National Cancer Institute’s Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results (SEER) registry program.

Founded in 1974, the mission of the **Northern California Cancer Center** is to reduce the burden of cancer through surveillance, epidemiology, prevention research and education. Essential to this mission is collaboration with partners in cancer research, education and the community.