

Foreword

Differences in morbidity and mortality across socioeconomic groups have been documented since the beginning of this century. IARC has previously published an overview of the data from England and Wales up to the early 1980s (*Cancer Mortality by Occupation and Social Class 1851–1971*, IARC Scientific Publications No. 36). This new publication brings together data on socioeconomic differences in cancer incidence and survival from many countries. In addition, detailed information on the social distribution of the most important causes of cancer is presented. This book shows that in both industrialized and less-developed countries, cancer incidence and cancer survival are related to socioeconomic status. Lower classes tend to have higher cancer incidence and poorer cancer survival than higher social classes, although this pattern differs for specific cancers. It is shown that social class differences in cancer incidence can, in part, be explained by known risk factors, particularly tobacco smoking, occupational exposures, reproductive behaviour, diet and chronic infections.

This book is intended to stimulate research in understanding the causes of socioeconomic differences in cancer and will help in developing appropriate effective measures for the prevention of social inequalities in cancer control.

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The Editors