

Foreword

Cancer Incidence in Five Continents (CI5) is the result of the fruitful collaboration between the International Agency for Research on Cancer and the network of cancer registries worldwide, represented by the International Association of Cancer Registries. Although this collaboration extends into many areas, CI5 is probably the best known, and has become the recognized reference source on the incidence of different types of cancer worldwide. With the publication of the eighth volume, containing data from the middle 1990s, the series now encompasses a period of about 35 years, providing invaluable information on cancer patterns geographically, by ethnic group, and over time.

The eighth volume sees an expansion of geographical coverage, with data appearing for the first time from two countries in Asia (Pakistan and Oman) and Europe (Belgium, Lithuania), and with a greatly enhanced contribution from cancer registries in several countries where representation was previously more limited – notably China, India and Korea. Registries are included in the CI5 series only if they meet high standards of completeness and validity. Users of the material can therefore be confident that, in making comparisons of incidence rates within the volume, and with earlier data, any differences observed are not due to artefacts from the registration process.

The material presented in Volume VIII contains printed tables in the traditional book, and data that can be inspected on, or printed from the attached CD-ROM. The latter includes the familiar tables – which were previously printed – showing age-specific incidence rates by cancer site and sex, the distribution of cancers by histological type, and age-standardized incidence rates for the 'subsites' (fourth digit codes) of the ICD categories. The CD also contains the databases used for both Volumes VII and VIII, with software to analyse, present or export the information of interest. As a result, the size of the printed volume has been reduced, while it retains the statistical indicators most often required by researchers.

The geography of cancer still presents some fascinating insights in possible causes, both environmental and inherited, and I hope that the current volume, like its predecessors, will provide researchers with both information and inspiration.

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