

Avoidable mortality (AM) in Victoria from 1997 to 2003 due to *breast cancer*

Definitions

Avoidable mortality (AM) refers to deaths classed as untimely and unnecessary – deaths from diseases for which effective public health and/or medical interventions currently exist – in those aged under 75 years.

Fifty-six conditions, including *breast cancer*, currently meet these requirements. All other deaths in people aged less than 75 years are considered unavoidable. Deaths in those aged 75 years and over are also considered unavoidable and not included in the analyses.

Breast cancer is the most common invasive cancer in females and responsible for the highest death rate. It is uncommon in males.

Key AM findings on *breast cancer*

Breast cancer was the fifth leading cause of avoidable mortality (AM), predominantly in women, between 1997 and 2003.

Avoidable *breast cancer* deaths increased sharply among women aged between 25 and 29 years, reached a plateau between the ages of 50 to 54 years, then increased between the ages of 65 to 69 years.

The greatest number of deaths were in women aged between 70 and 74 years. See graph 1.

The avoidable *breast cancer* death rate in women significantly declined between 1997 and 2003. Rates would be expected to further decline if the trend continues. See graph 2.

Disadvantage and location

There were no significant differences in avoidable *breast cancer* death rates by socio-economic status. In 2003, women in rural Victoria had a significantly higher rate than women in the metropolitan area, but not in any of the other six years. See table 1.

General information

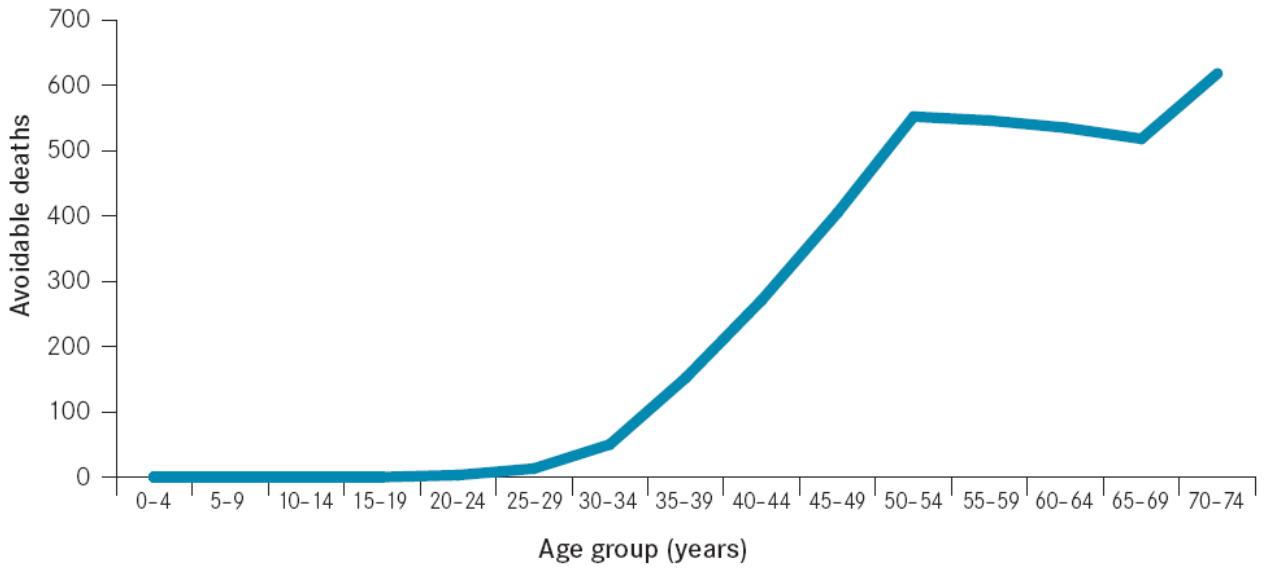
This fact sheet is an adjunct to *Avoidable Mortality in Victoria: Trends between 1997 and 2003*, the first comprehensive report on AM in Victoria which provides a detailed examination of the 10 most common causes of AM, which together account for 50% of deaths in the state during this period.

The report is compiled via a simple and practical Victoria-wide, population-based method of counting AM rates.

Declining trends in AM may indicate improvements in the healthcare system.

Increasing trends in AM may indicate shortcomings in the healthcare system, such as a lack of use of effective interventions.

Graph 1: Avoidable breast cancer deaths by age from 1997 to 2003



Graph 2: AM rates in Victoria (1997 to 2003) due to breast cancer

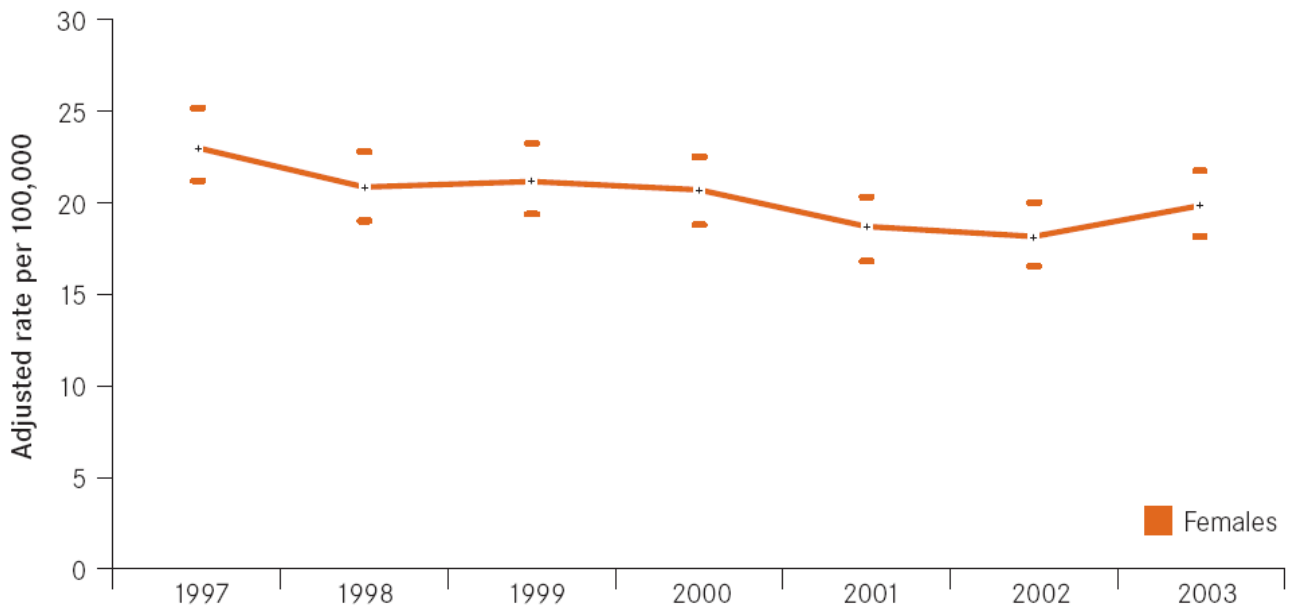


Table 1: Adjusted breast cancer AM rates (95% CI) in Victorian females (1997–2003)

		Females (rate per 100,000)																				
		1997			1998			1999			2000			2001			2002			2003		
Breast cancer		Adjusted	95%CI	Adjusted	95%CI	Adjusted	95%CI	Adjusted	95%CI	Adjusted	95%CI	Adjusted	95%CI	Adjusted	95%CI	Adjusted	95%CI	Adjusted	95%CI			
Victoria		23	21 25	21	19 23	21	19 23	21	19 23	21	19 22	19	17 20	18	16 20	20	18 22	20	18 22			
	Metropolitan	23	20 25	20	18 22	23	20 25	21	19 23	19	17 21	18	16 20	18	16 20	18	16 20	18	16 20			
	Rural	24	20 28	23	19 27	18	15 22	19	16 23	18	15 21	18	15 21	18	15 21	24	20 27	24	20 27			
IRSED category:																						
	Most disadvantaged	24	19 28	20	16 25	21	17 25	20	16 24	17	13 21	17	13 21	17	13 21	18	14 22	18	14 22			
	2	20	16 24	20	16 25	24	19 28	17	13 21	20	16 24	22	18 26	22	18 26	22	18 26	22	18 26			
	3	25	20 30	19	15 23	18	14 22	22	18 27	19	15 23	14	10 17	19	15 23	19	15 23	19	15 23			
	4	23	19 28	23	19 28	22	17 26	20	16 24	20	16 24	20	16 24	20	16 24	20	16 24	19	15 23			
	Least disadvantaged	24	19 29	22	17 26	22	18 26	23	19 28	18	14 21	18	14 21	18	14 21	21	16 25	21	16 25			
ARIA category:																						
	Accessible	22	14 29	19	12 26	22	15 30	24	17 32	16	10 23	15	9 21	19	13 26	19	13 26	19	13 26			
	Highly Accessible	23	21 25	21	19 23	21	19 23	20	18 22	19	17 21	18	16 20	19	18 21	19	18 21	19	18 21			
	Moderately accessible	29	16 41	27	15 39	24	13 36	22	11 34	16	7 26	32	19 45	30	18 43	30	18 43	30	18 43			
Rate ratios:																						
Male:Female																						
	Rural:Metro	1.05		1.16		0.81		0.92		0.95		0.99		1.32								
	Most:Least disadvantaged	0.98		0.94		0.95		0.86		0.99		0.97		0.86								
	Least:Most accessible	1.24		1.30		1.15		1.10		0.85		1.76		1.57								

Note: Adjusted rates are significantly different (P<0.05) when their 95% confidence intervals do not overlap
 Adjusted rates and rate ratios in **RED** are significantly greater (P<0.05) than the corresponding rate for Victoria or 1, respectively
 Adjusted rates and rate ratios in **GREEN** are significantly lower (P<0.05) than the corresponding rate for Victoria or 1, respectively

Information in this fact sheet is taken from the report, *Avoidable Mortality in Victoria: Trends between 1997 and 2003*.