

The Daily

Statistics Canada

Monday, July 28, 1997
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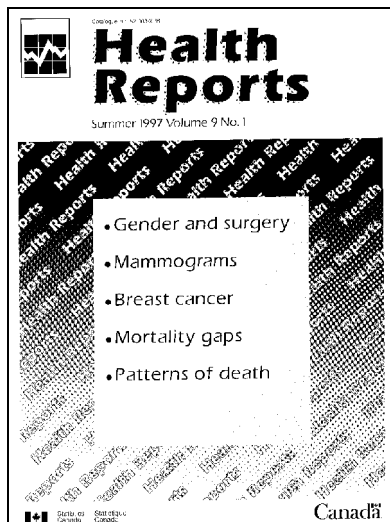
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Breast cancer mortality rates have reached their lowest level in more than four decades.

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Health reports Summer 1997

The Summer 1997 issue of *Health reports* contains articles entitled: "Update on breast cancer mortality, 1995," "Who doesn't get a mammogram?," "Narrowing mortality gaps, 1978 to 1995," "Monthly and daily patterns of death" and "Gender differences in abdominal aortic aneurysm surgery."

Health reports provides comprehensive and timely analysis of national and provincial health information and vital statistics derived from surveys or administrative databases. It is designed for a broad audience including health professionals, researchers, policy makers, educators and students.

The Summer 1997 issue of *Health reports*, Vol. 9, no. 1 (82-003-XPB, \$35/\$116) is now available. See *How to order publications*.

For further information, contact Jane Gentleman (613-951-8553; fax: 613-951-0792; Internet: gentjan@statcan.ca), Health Statistics Division.



MAJOR RELEASES

Breast cancer mortality and mammography

1995

Breast cancer mortality rates have reached their lowest level in more than four decades, according to new data.

In 1995, 28.4 of every 100,000 females of all ages died of breast cancer, down from 31.3 in 1990. From 1950 to 1990, rates remained relatively steady, fluctuating between 29.5 and 32.0 deaths per 100,000 females. Since 1990, there has been an overall decline.

Between 1986 and 1995, statistically significant decreases in breast cancer mortality rates occurred in all age groups from 30 to 70, including women aged 50 to 69, who have been targeted for mammographic screening by provincial breast-screening programs.

The use of mammography for the early detection of breast cancer has risen considerably in Canada since the mid-1980s. In combination with other factors, such as advances in treatment and changing fertility patterns, the earlier diagnoses achieved with mammography may be playing a role in the decline of breast cancer mortality rates. However, because the breast cancer mortality rate declined so soon after the increase in mammographic screening, it is unlikely that screening alone was behind the downturn.

Mortality rates down among women in their fifties and sixties

The breast cancer mortality rate for women in their fifties has dropped by an average of about 2% a year since 1986, while for women in their sixties, the downturn began more recently. Rates for the latter group fell by more than 4% a year between 1990 and 1995.

In 1995, 57.4 women in every 100,000 in their fifties died of breast cancer, down from 62.4 in 1990. Similarly, 80.4 women in every 100,000 in their sixties died of breast cancer in 1995, down substantially from 103.5 in 1990. Part of this decline stems from changes in fertility: mothers of the baby boom generation, now in their sixties, appear to have lowered their risk of breast cancer by having more children earlier.

More than 630,000 women in their fifties and sixties never screened

The Canadian Cancer Society recommends that women aged 50 to 69 have a mammogram every

Note to readers

This release is based on two articles in the Summer 1997 issue of Health reports. "Update on breast cancer mortality, 1995" presents the most recent information on deaths from breast cancer in Canada. "Who doesn't get a mammogram?" looks at the characteristics of women aged 50 to 69 who have had, or have not had, mammograms.

The data on breast cancer mortality rates are from the Canadian Vital Statistics Data Base, maintained by Statistics Canada. Mammography data are from the 1994/95 National Population Health Survey (NPHS) conducted by Statistics Canada. The latter analysis focuses on 2,111 women aged 50 to 69 who provided information about their history of having mammograms. This report follows a ground-breaking study in Health reports (Vol. 8, no. 3), released on March 13, 1997, which documented national trends in mammography use since the early 1980s.

two years. According to Statistics Canada's 1994/95 National Population Health Survey (NPHS), three out of four women in this age group, or about 1.9 million, had at least one mammographic examination at some point in their life.

However, there were still more than 630,000 women in their fifties and sixties who had never had a mammogram. As well, one-quarter of the women who had a mammogram had not done so in the preceding two years. Therefore, about 1.1 million women in the targeted age group either did not get mammograms, or did not report having had them as often as recommended.

Several socio-economic traits associated with not having had a mammogram

The survey found several socio-economic characteristics associated with women aged 50 to 69 who have never had mammograms.

They were likely to be single and have relatively little education. They were not likely to be in the paid work force, and they were not likely to have visited a physician in the preceding year. The chances of having mammograms were also low for immigrants from South and Central America, the Caribbean, Africa and Asia.

The odds that a woman with university or college education had had a mammogram were twice those of a woman who had not graduated from high school. Women who had consulted doctors recently were three times as likely to have had a mammogram than those who had not seen a doctor during the preceding year.

In addition, some provinces have had more success than others in reaching the target population.

The two with the longest running organized breast-screening programs — British Columbia and Saskatchewan — had the highest rates of women in their fifties and sixties ever having had a mammogram.

The Summer 1997 issue of *Health reports* (82-003-XPB, \$35/\$116) is now available. See *How to order publications*.

For more information on breast cancer mortality, contact Leslie Gaudette (613-951-1740), or for information on mammography, contact Jane Gentleman (613-951-8553; Internet: gentjan@statcan.ca), Health Statistics Division. ■

OTHER RELEASES

Department store sales and stocks

June 1997

Seasonally adjusted department store sales rose 0.4% from May to reach \$1,317 million in June. Compared with June 1996, sales were up 10.4%, the fourth double-digit year-over-year increase reported since January.

Sales for the first half of 1997 closed at \$7,748.5 million, a gain of 9.5% over the same period in 1996. Sales were higher in both the first (+8.7%) and second quarters (+10.2%) of 1997. Department store sales have been on the rise since the end of 1993, except for a pause in the latter half of 1995.

Unadjusted sales totalled \$1,254 million, a 9.3% increase over June 1996. Cumulative sales for the first six months of 1997 were \$6,453 million, up 9.3% from the same period last year (unadjusted).

In June, Ontario led all provinces in unadjusted year-over-year sales, posting a double-digit increase (+12.7%) for the fourth consecutive month. Following a 16.6% increase in May, British Columbia, the Yukon and the Northwest Territories reported the smallest year-over-year gain in June (+1.7%).

For the first six months of the year, Alberta (+11.5%), Ontario (+11.2%) and Saskatchewan (+10.9%) posted the largest year-over-year gains. New Brunswick recorded the smallest year-to-date increase at 4.7%.

Note: Beginning with this release, sales for the Montréal, Vancouver and Winnipeg census metropolitan areas are no longer available. Data on department store sales by merchandise department and seasonally adjusted total stocks are now available.

Department store sales including concessions

	June 1997	June 1996 to June 1997	Jan. to June 1997	Jan.- June 1996 to Jan.- June 1997
	unadjusted			
	\$ millions	% change	\$ millions	% change
Canada	1,253.6	9.3	6,453.4	9.3
Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island	22.3	9.0	112.0	6.3
Nova Scotia	37.4	9.6	191.1	7.5
New Brunswick	28.2	5.8	140.8	4.7
Quebec	239.7	8.4	1,211.3	6.4
Ontario	534.2	12.7	2,705.4	11.2
Manitoba	53.5	5.2	271.3	6.0
Saskatchewan	42.0	9.3	210.5	10.9
Alberta	135.4	9.8	719.5	11.5
British Columbia, Yukon and Northwest Territories	160.9	1.7	891.3	8.3

Available on CANSIM: matrices 111-113.

The June 1997 issue of *Department store sales and stocks* (63-002-XPB, \$17/\$165) will be available shortly. See *How to order publications*.

For analytical information, contact Irwin Bess (613-951-4166) Retail Commodity Section, Distributive Trades Division. For further information on this release, contact Louise G n reux (613-951-3549). ■

PUBLICATIONS RELEASED

Health reports, Summer 1997, Vol. 9, no.1
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(Canada: \$35/\$116; outside Canada: US\$35/US\$116).

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 Statistics Canada	
Thursday, June 5, 1997 For release at 8:30 a.m.	
MAJOR RELEASES	
• Urban transit, 1995	2
<small>Despite the emphasis on taking urban transit, Canadians are using it less and less. In 1996, 65% of Canadian cities on average of about as high on some form of urban transit, the lowest level in the past 25 years.</small>	
• Productivity, hourly compensation and unit labour cost, 1995	4
<small>Growth in productivity among Canadian businesses was notably weak again in 1996, accompanied by sluggish gains in employment and slow economic growth during the year.</small>	
OTHER RELEASES	
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• Short-term Expectations Survey	3
• Steel primary forms, sales ending May 31, 1997	12
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Editor: Arn Keeling (613-951-1103)

Head of Official Release: Chantal Prévost (613-951-1088)

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