



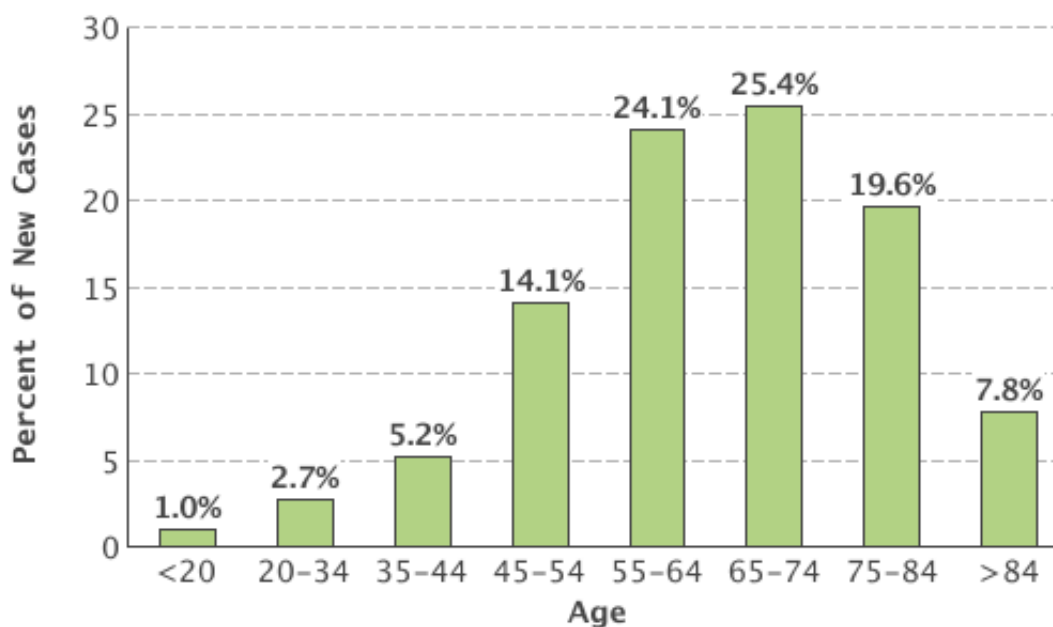
Age

Advancing age is the most important risk factor for cancer overall, and for many individual cancer types. According to the most recent statistical data from [NCI's Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results program](#), the median age of a cancer diagnosis is 66 years. This means that half of cancer cases occur in people below this age and half in people above this age. One-quarter of new cancer cases are diagnosed in people aged 65 to 74.

A similar pattern is seen for many common cancer types. For example, the median age at diagnosis is 61 years for breast cancer, 68 years for colorectal cancer, 70 years for lung cancer, and 66 years for prostate cancer.

But the disease can occur at any age. For example, bone cancer is most frequently diagnosed among people under age 20, with more than one-fourth of cases occurring in this age group. And 10 percent of leukemias are diagnosed in children and adolescents under 20 years of age, whereas only 1 percent of cancer overall is diagnosed in that age group. Some types of cancer, such as neuroblastoma, are more common in children or adolescents than in adults.

Percent of New Cancers by Age Group: All Cancer Sites



SEER 18 2007-2011, All Races, Both Sexes

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