

4 Cancer of the stomach

Summary

Relative survival after a diagnosis of cancer of the stomach was poor when compared with other cancer sites. For the period 1992–1997, relative survival one year after diagnosis of cancer of the stomach was 46.4% for males and 47.0% for females. The five-year relative survival proportion for males was 22.6% and for females was 24.8% (Table 4.1). Survival ten years after diagnosis was 20.1% for males and 21.4% for females in 1987–1991, the most recent period for which ten-year relative survival data are available (Tables 4.2 and 4.3).

Between the diagnosis periods 1982–1986, 1987–1991 and 1992–1997, stomach cancer relative survival increased. This increase was significant between 1982–1986 and 1992–1997 (Figure 4.1). Also, there was a significant increase in stomach cancer relative survival for males between the diagnosis periods 1982–1986 and 1987–1991 for both one- and two-year relative survival. Similarly, between the diagnosis periods 1987–1991 and 1992–1997 for females, there was a significant increase in one-, two- and four- year relative survival (Tables 4.2 and 4.3).

Five-year relative survival proportions tended to decrease as age increased. For males, relative survival was highest for those aged 30–39 and 40–49 years (30.6%), and five-year relative survival was highest for females aged 20–29 years (45.6%). Five-year relative survival proportions decreased to 18.7% for males and 19.8% for females aged 70–79 years, and 6.1% for males and 11.0% for females aged 90–99 years (Figure 4.3; Table 4.1).

For individual age groups, five-year relative survival after diagnosis of stomach cancer increased between 1982–1986 and 1992–1997 for males aged 70–79 years and for females aged 80–89 years only (Figure 4.3; Tables 4.5 and 4.6).

Table 4.1: Cancer of the stomach: number of new cases and deaths, and five-year relative survival proportions, by age at diagnosis and sex, Australia, 1992–1997

Age	New cases		Deaths		5-year relative survival (%)	
	Males	Females	Males	Females	Males	Females
0–19 years	1	2	0	1	*	*
20–29 years	27	22	20	13	24.8	45.6
30–39 years	121	87	84	46	30.6	43.5
40–49 years	419	230	293	141	30.6	38.1
50–59 years	922	365	666	248	27.6	31.4
60–69 years	1,990	814	1,555	597	23.5	26.6
70–79 years	2,388	1,214	2,014	992	18.7	19.8
80–89 years	1,181	981	1,065	865	17.0	19.7
90–99 years	117	145	114	140	6.1	11.0
All ages	7,166	3,860	5,811	3,043	22.6	24.8

* Interpretation difficult due to statistical instability. The instability in this age/sex/site group may be due to the survival model's handling a combination of small number of cases/deaths and or unstable background survival patterns resulting in invalid estimates. These results are therefore not presented here.

Incidence and mortality

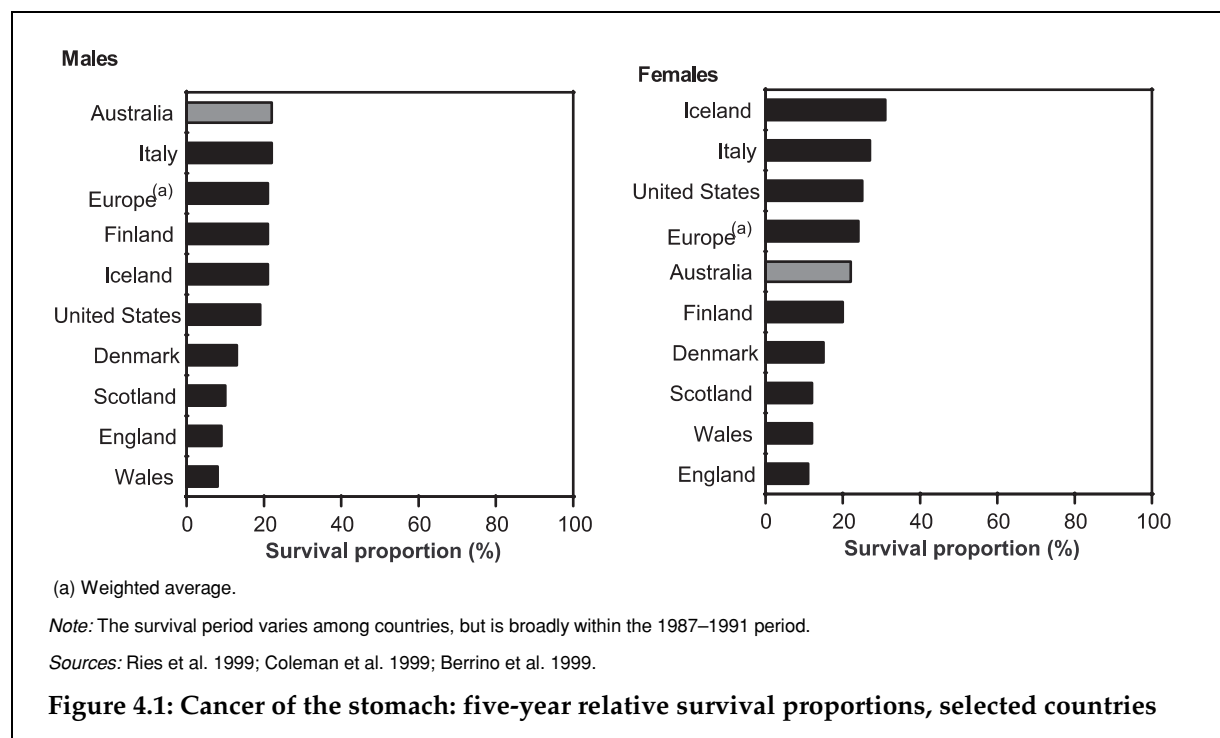
In 1997, there were 1,928 new cases of stomach cancer diagnosed in Australia. Of these 1,201 were for males, and 727 were for females.

In 1997, 768 males and 476 females died from stomach cancer. It is estimated that stomach cancer is responsible for about 5,300 years of life lost in males, and 2,900 years of life lost in females before the age of 75 each year.

For the six-year period 1992–1997, age-standardised incidence and mortality rates for cancer of the stomach in males decreased, with incidence falling by 2.6% per annum and mortality falling by 2.9% per annum. For females, age-standardised incidence rates increased slightly by 0.3% per annum, and age-standardised mortality rates decreased by 2.0% per annum.

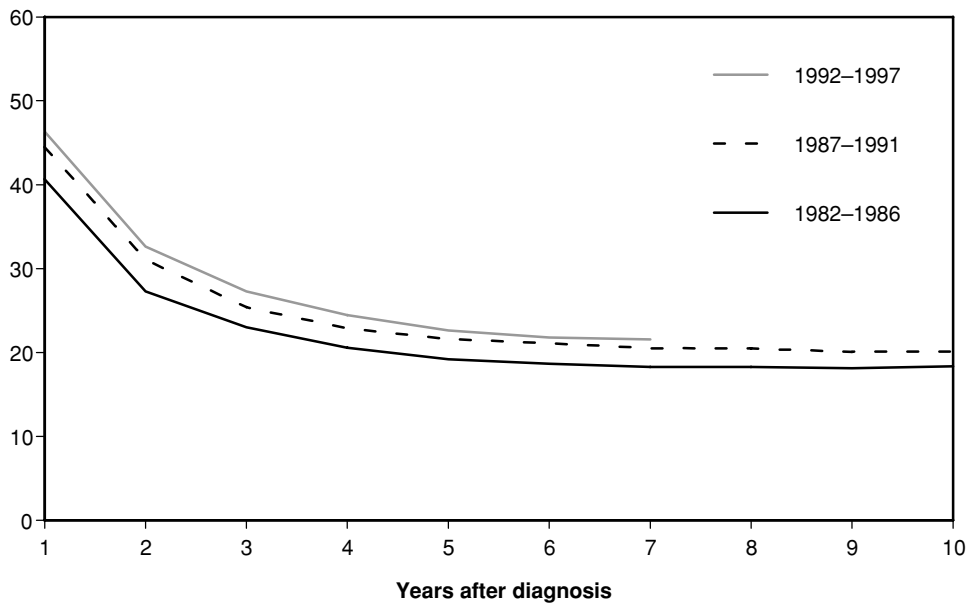
International comparisons

Five-year relative survival after diagnosis of stomach cancer in Australia compares favourably with that in other Western countries for which relative survival data are available. Australian males have the highest five-year relative survival, followed closely by Italy, Europe, Finland, Iceland and the United States. Although the ranking is quite different, the same six countries have similar five-year relative survival proportions for females, with Australia ranked fifth of the selected countries (Figure 4.1).



Males

Relative survival (%)



Females

Relative survival (%)

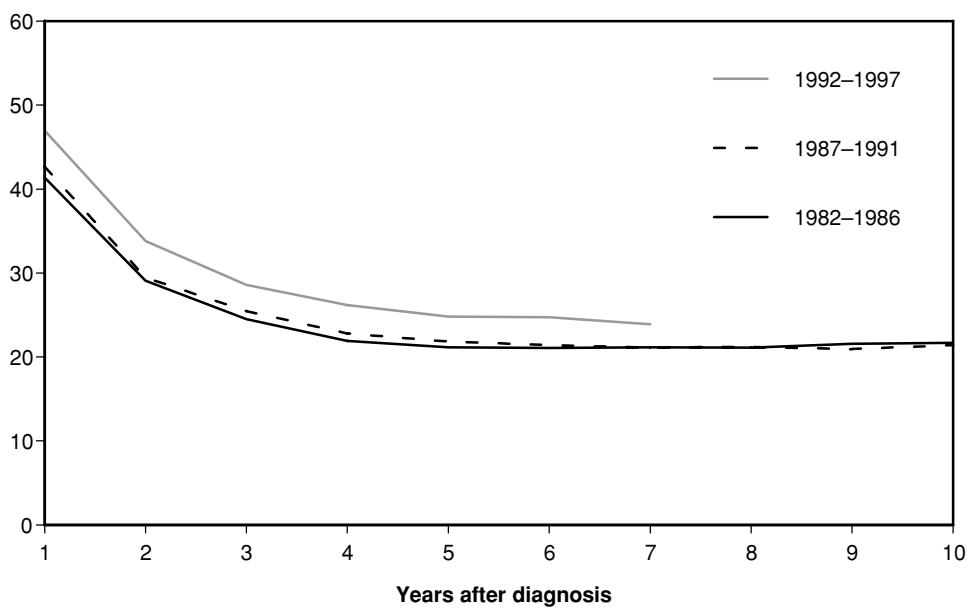
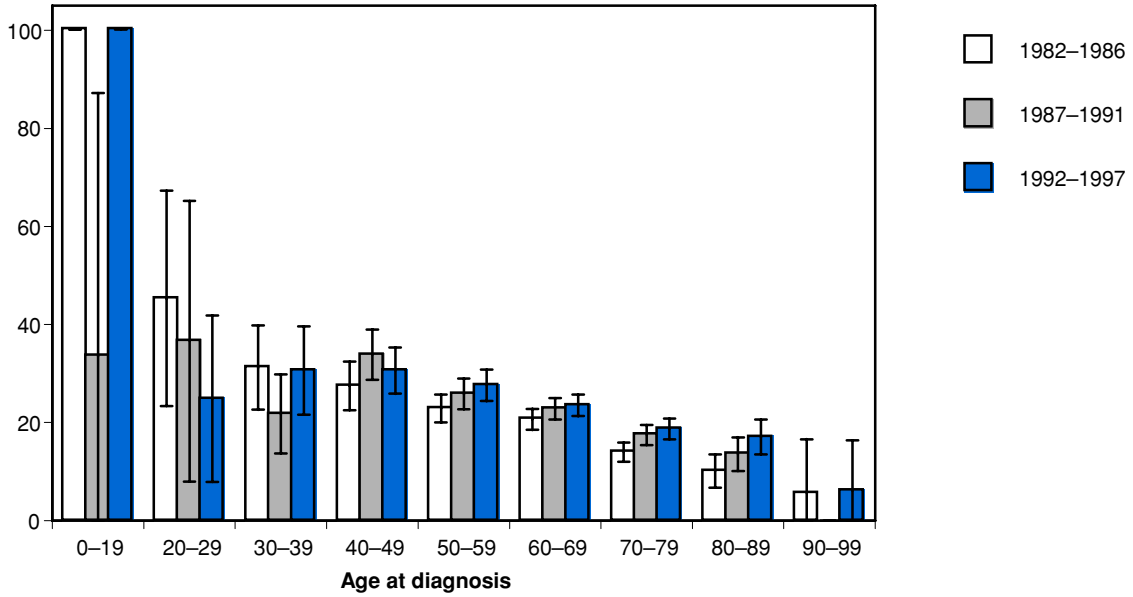


Figure 4.2: Cancer of the stomach relative survival proportions: period of diagnosis, Australia

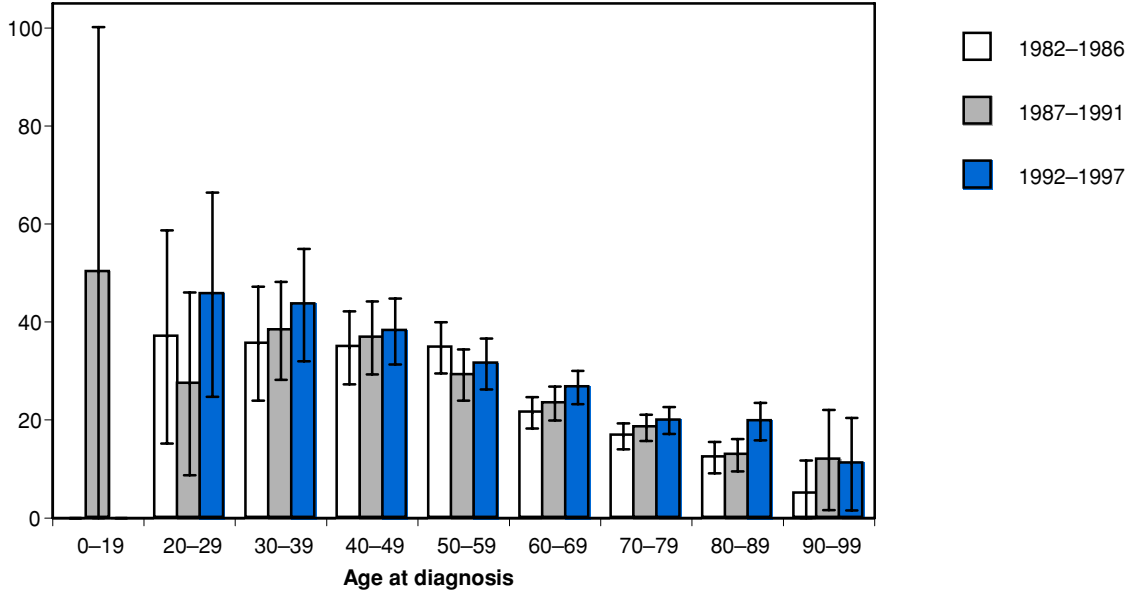
Males

Survival proportion (%)



Females

Survival proportion (%)



Note: 95% confidence intervals are shown for each age group.

Figure 4.3: Cancer of the stomach five-year relative survival proportions: age at diagnosis by period of diagnosis, Australia