

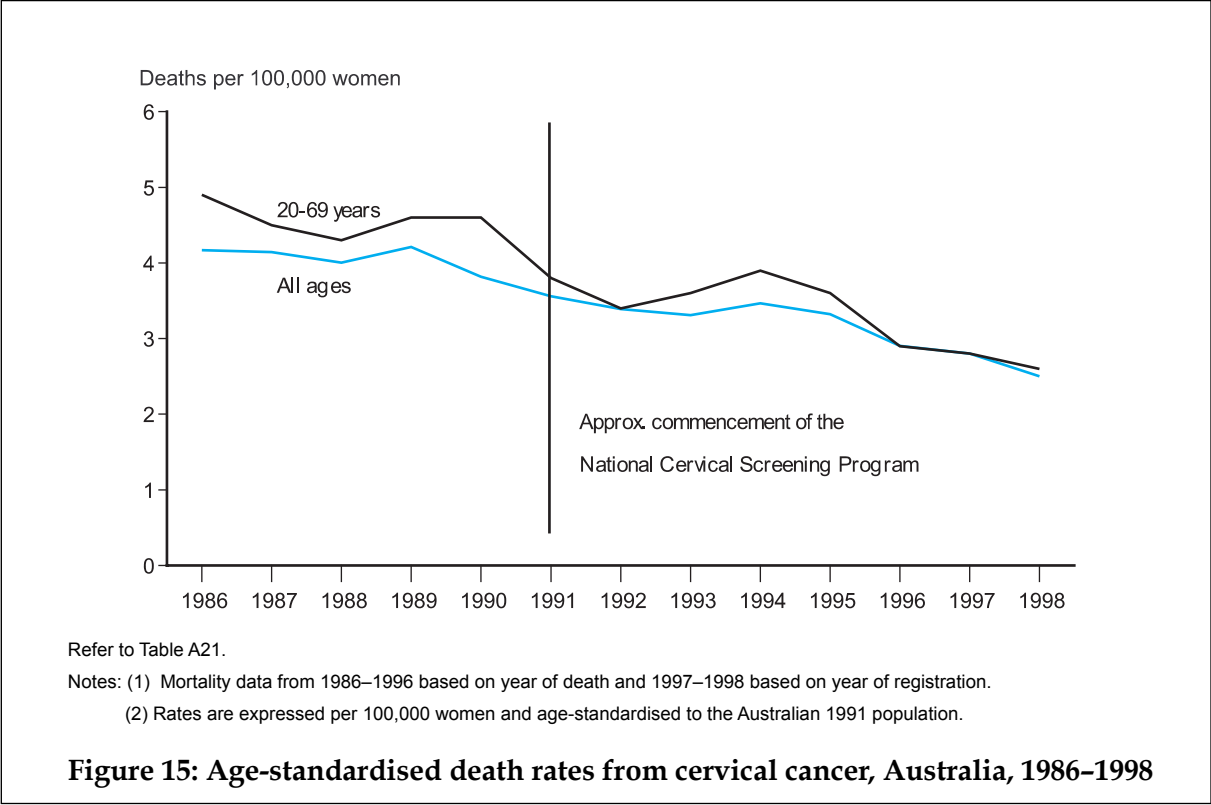
# Mortality

Cancer of the cervix is one of the few cancers for which there is an efficacious screening test for detection of the disease at an early stage, and most deaths due to cervical cancer are potentially avoidable (Marcus & Crane 1998). However, some deaths do occur and the objective of the National Cervical Screening Program is to reduce this mortality rate.

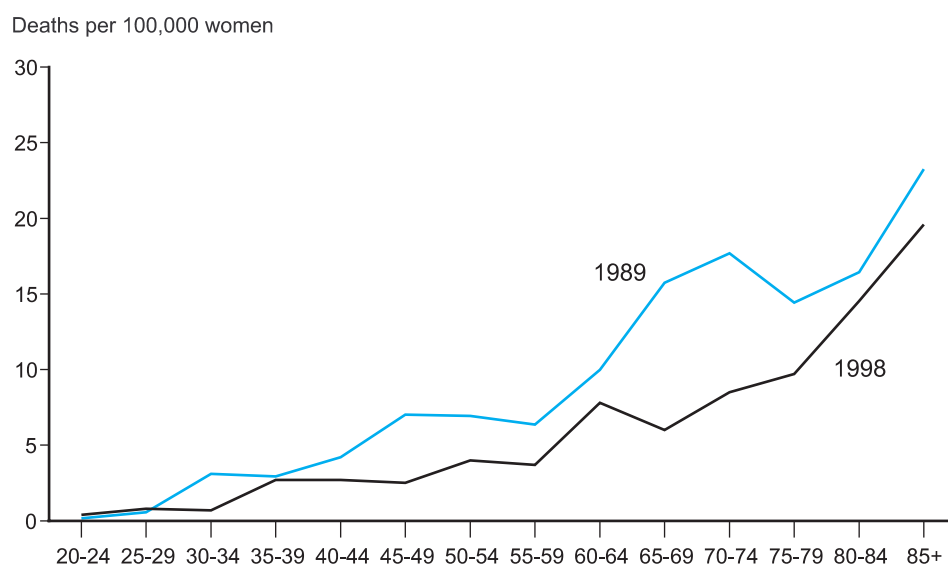
The indicators measure the level of mortality from cervical cancer in the total female population by age and other demographic characteristics. This indicator is important because from it an assessment can be made of changes in mortality in different age groups and particular target groups over time. However, it should be noted that changes in the mortality rates may not be evident for a number of years following an improvement in the participation rate. Therefore the effectiveness of this measure needs to be viewed in the longer rather than the shorter term.

# Indicator 7: Mortality

Death rate from cervical cancer per 100,000 estimated resident female population in a 12-month period by 5-year age groups (20–24, 25–29, 30–34, 35–39, 40–44, 45–49, 50–54, 55–59, 60–64, 65–69, 70–74, 75–79, 80–84, 85+) and for the target age group (20–69 years – age-standardised).



- Cervical cancer is the 14th most common cause of cancer death in women, accounting for 269 deaths in 1998. The age-standardised mortality rate for all ages was 2.5 per 100,000 women in 1998. Mortality from cervical cancer has been declining over time, and between 1986 and 1998 the age-standardised cervical cancer death rate declined by 40% (Table A21).
- In the target age group (women aged 20–69), mortality rates have declined at approximately the same rate as those for all ages from 4.9 per 100,000 women in 1986 to 2.6 per 100,000 women in 1998 (Table A21).
- The death rate from cervical cancer declined in most age groups between the years 1991 and 1998, in particular in the 30–34 age group (65%), and in the 45–49 age group (54%) (Table A21)..

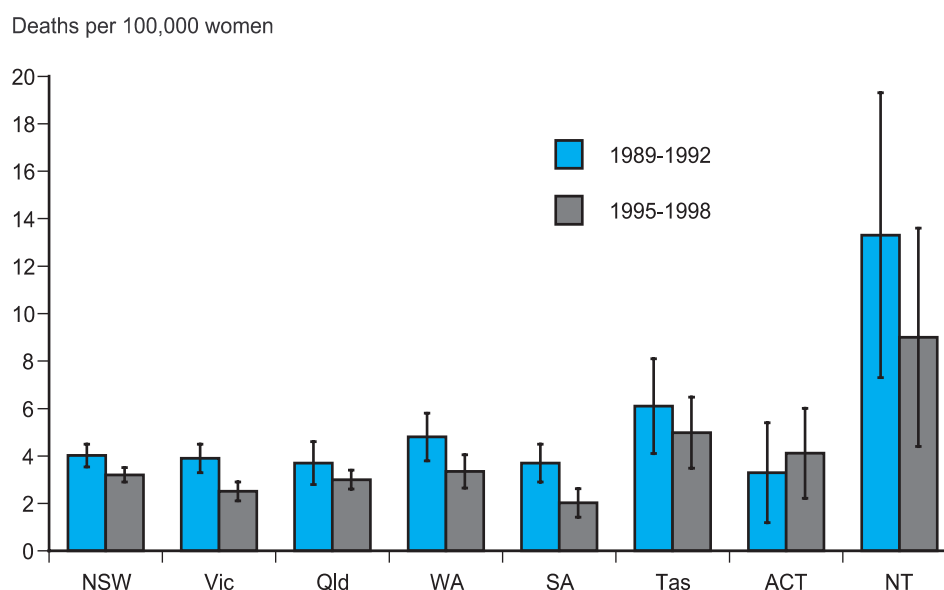


Refer to Table A21.

Note: Mortality data for 1989 is based on year of death and 1998 based on year of registration.

**Figure 16: Age-specific cervical cancer death rates by age group, Australia, 1989 and 1998**

- As with most cancers, cervical cancer mortality increases with age. Very few deaths occur in women aged less than 20 years of age (on average < 1 per year). Death rates tend to increase gradually from age 25–29 years through to those women in the 80-plus age group where the rate increases sharply (Table A21).
- In 1998, in the target age group, the age-specific death rate increased gradually from a rate of 0.4 per 100,000 women in those aged 20–24 years to 6.0 deaths per 100,000 women in the 65–69 age group (Table A21).
- Between 1989 and 1998, age-specific death rates have declined in all age groups.



Refer to Tables A23 and A25.

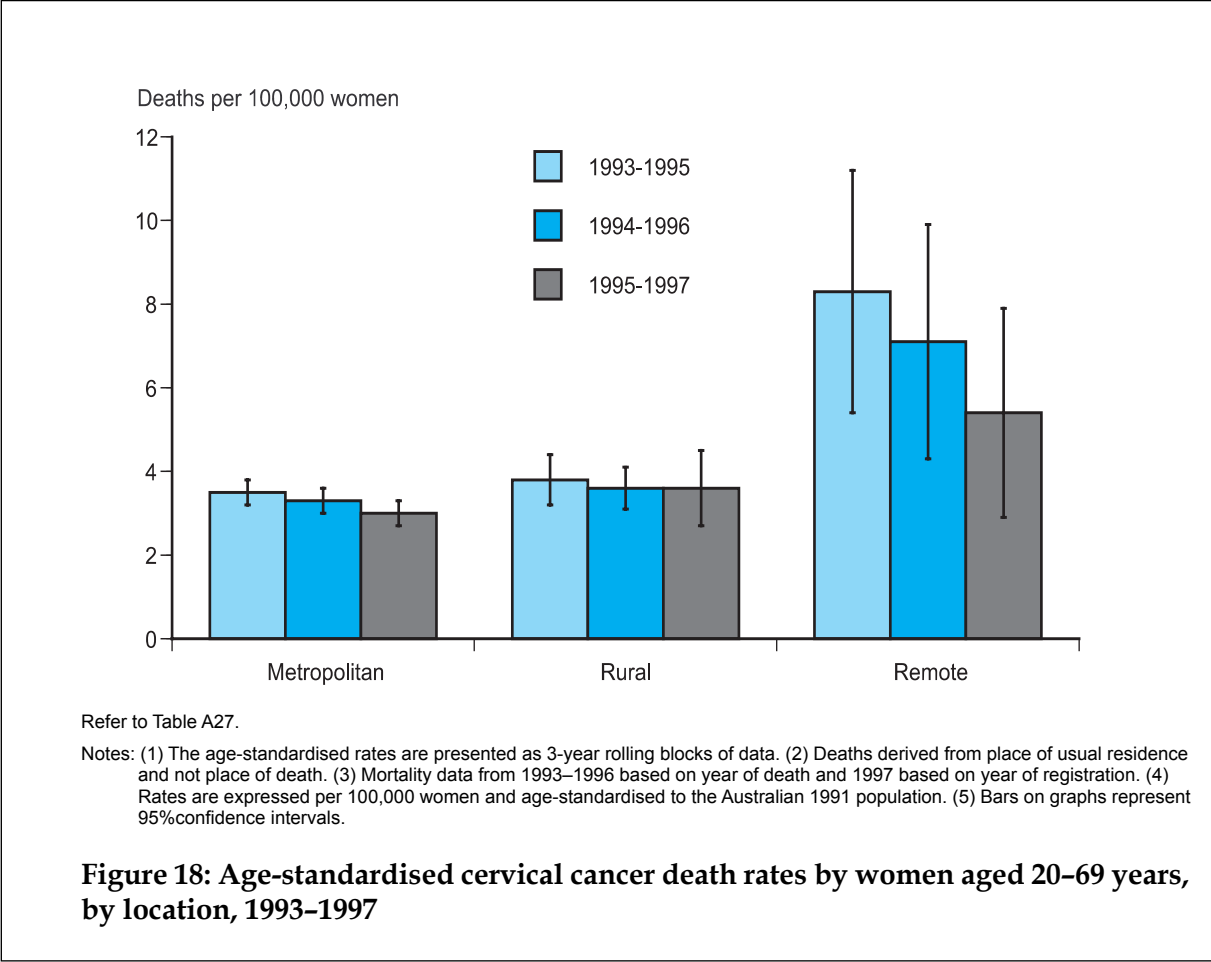
Notes: (1) The age-standardised rates were averaged over 4 years to smooth annual variations that may occur in the smaller States and Territories. (2) Deaths derived from place of usual residence and not place of death. (3) Mortality data from 1989–1996 based on year of death and 1997–1998 based on year of registration. (4) Rates are expressed per 100,000 women and age-standardised to the Australian 1991 population. (5) Bars on graphs represent 95% confidence intervals.

**Figure 17: Age-standardised cervical cancer death rates by women aged 20–69 years, by State and Territory, 1989–1992 and 1995–1998**

- There were 1,206 deaths from cervical cancer in the States and Territories during the period from 1995–1998. As expected the largest number of deaths from cervical cancer were in the most populous States of New South Wales (441) and Victoria (272) (Table A24).
- There was considerable variation in the age-standardised rates of cervical cancer mortality for all women between States and Territories. The Northern Territory rate (6.2 per 100,000 women) was nearly double that of the next highest State, Tasmania (3.5 per 100,000 women) (Table A25). The age-standardised cervical cancer mortality rate for the Northern Territory reflects its high proportion of Aboriginal women. In the period 1987–1993 Aboriginal women were almost 12 times more likely to die from cervical cancer than other Northern Territory women (d’Espaignet et al 1996).
- There was a similar pattern between States and Territories for women in the target age group, 20–69 years. The Northern Territory rate (9.0 per 100,000 women) was again almost double that of the next highest State, Tasmania (5.0 per 100,000 women), and South Australia (2.0 per 100,000 women) and Victoria (2.5 per 100,000 women) had the lowest rates of death from cervical cancer (Table A25).

# Indicator 9: Mortality by location

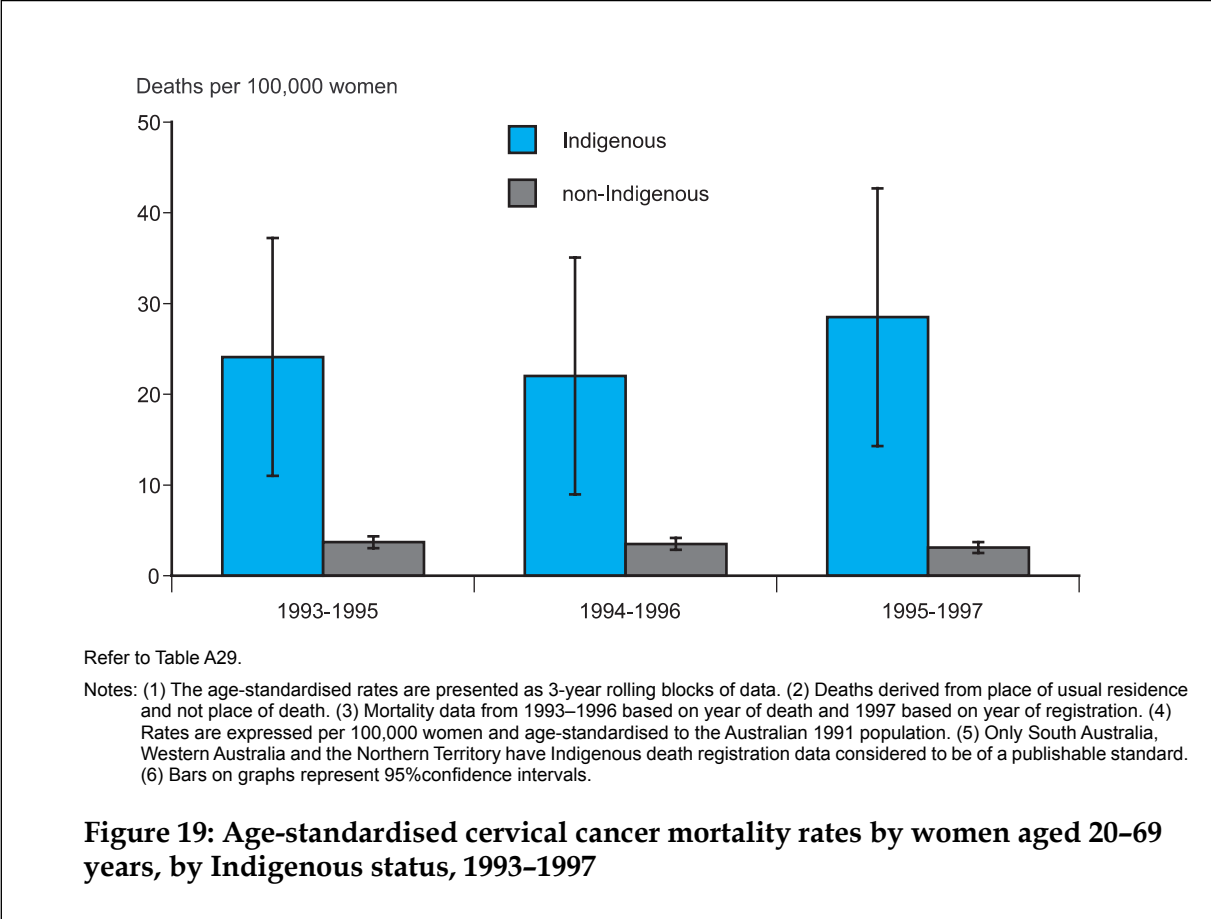
Death rate from cervical cancer per 100,000 estimated resident female population in a 3-year period by location and 5-year age groups (20–24, 25–29, 30–34, 35–39, 40–44, 45–49, 50–54, 55–59, 60–64, 65–69, 70–74, 75–79, 80–84, 85+) and for the target age group (20–69 years – age-standardised).



- In the 3-year period 1995–1997 there were 643 deaths (69% of all deaths) attributed to cervical cancer in metropolitan locations, 268 deaths (28% of all deaths) in rural locations and 26 deaths (3% of all deaths) in remote locations (Table A26).
- The age-standardised cervical cancer death rate for women in the target age group 20–69 years was highest in remote locations (5.4 per 100,000 women) in the period 1995–1997. During the same period the rate for cervical cancer deaths in metropolitan and rural locations were 3.0 and 3.6 per 100,000 women (Table A27).
- The age-standardised cervical cancer death rate declined for all locations during the three periods, 1993–1995, 1994–1996 and 1995–1997, for women in the target age group 20–69 years. The overall decline in the target age group was 14 per cent in metropolitan locations, 5 per cent in rural locations, and 35 per cent in remote locations (Table A27).
- The higher death rate in remote location probably reflects to a large extent the relatively high proportion of Indigenous people in remote areas, and the higher death rates among Indigenous women (see Indicator 10).

# Indicator 10: Indigenous mortality

Death rate from cervical cancer per 100,000 estimated resident female population in a 3-year period by Indigenous status and 5-year age groups (20-24, 25-29, 30-34, 35-39, 40-44, 45-49, 50-54, 55-59, 60-64, 65-69, 70-74, 75-79, 80-84, 85+) and for the target age group (20-69 years – age-standardised).



- Due to the difficulties of Indigenous identification in health data collections mortality data only from Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory is of sufficient quality to be publishable. Therefore all cervical cancer mortality data for both Indigenous women and non-Indigenous women used in this analysis are confined to these States and Territory.
- In the period from 1995 to 1997 there were 19 deaths attributable to cervical cancer among Indigenous women, an age-standardised rate of 27.6 per 100,000 women. This is over nine times more deaths than in the non-Indigenous women (3.0 per 100,000 women). The age-standardised rate for Indigenous women in the target age group 20-69 years was 28.5 per 100,000 women for the period 1995-1997. The comparative figure for the non-Indigenous women was 3.1 per 100,000 women (Tables A28 and A29).
- Over the three periods from 1993 to 1997 the Indigenous cervical cancer mortality rate among women in the target age group 20-69 years increased from 24 to 28 deaths per 100,000 women. However, this increase is not statistically significant and is mainly due to fluctuations in the small number of deaths rather than a real increase in the rate of cervical cancer deaths among Indigenous women (Table A29).