

BREAST CANCER

Breast cancer accounts for almost a quarter of new cancer cases among women.

Breast cancer is the leading cancer type in females in most countries in the world in 2018. **MAP 12.1** About one in twenty females will be diagnosed with breast cancer over the course of their lifetime, although this number varies significantly by country. **FIGURE 12.1** There are large variations in estimated incidence rates worldwide, with an almost fourfold difference between the highest- and lowest-ranked regions. **FIGURE 12.2** Incidence rates are elevated in Australia/New Zealand, Europe and North America, notably in Belgium (113 cases per 100,000 female population) and Luxembourg (109) in Europe, and in Australia (94). In contrast, incidence rates in sub-Saharan African regions, particularly in Eastern (30 cases per 100,000 female population) and Middle Africa (28), as well as South Central Asia (26), were considerably lower. Geographic variation is less pronounced for mortality rates, with the highest rates seen in Melanesia (26 deaths per 100,000 female population) and Polynesia (22), as well as in Northern and Western Africa (18). Notably, some countries in Europe, North America, and Oceania have among the lowest mortality rates despite their high incidence rates.

The variations observed in breast cancer incidence across countries can likely be at least partly attributed to differences in the prevalence and distribution of the major risk factors (e.g. reproductive factors, obesity) and partly to the degree of early detection and screening activities in operation. Breast cancer screening detects breast cancer at earlier stages, but also captures cases that would have never been diagnosed otherwise. As such, incidence rates are often higher in countries that implement breast cancer screening programs. In countries where the incidence of

breast cancer is high, there has been a decline or stabilization of rates, while in countries where rates have historically been low, rates have been markedly increasing, probably related to improved diagnosis (i.e., detection of asymptomatic cancers) in combination with socio-cultural changes linked to an increase in westernized lifestyle. **FIGURE 12.3** Declines in breast cancer mortality rates have been reported in many high-income countries, with large decreases in European and North American countries and in Australia and New Zealand, whereas countries in transition continue to show a slight increase in mortality from breast cancer, though this appears to be slowing. **FIGURE 12.4** The favorable trends in mortality may result from the combined effects of earlier detection (screening and increased breast cancer awareness) and a range of improvements in treatment.

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In lower-resource settings, breast and cervical cancer disproportionately affect women in the prime of life, resulting in significant economic and societal impact. A woman's country... should not be allowed to influence the likelihood of dying from these cancers.

— Dr. Ophira Ginsburg, medical oncologist

Lifetime risk of breast cancer among females in high-income countries can be up to three times that in low-income countries.

FIGURE 12.1

Cumulative risk of being diagnosed with female breast cancer by age 75 years, globally and in select countries

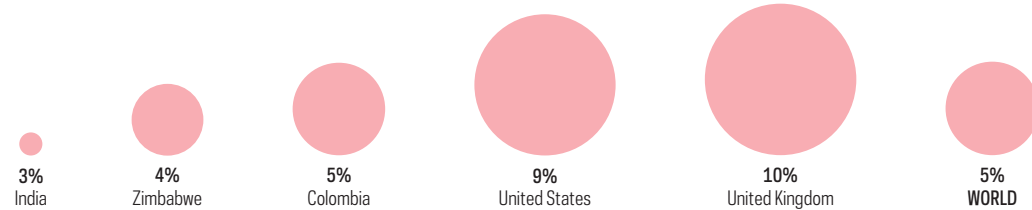
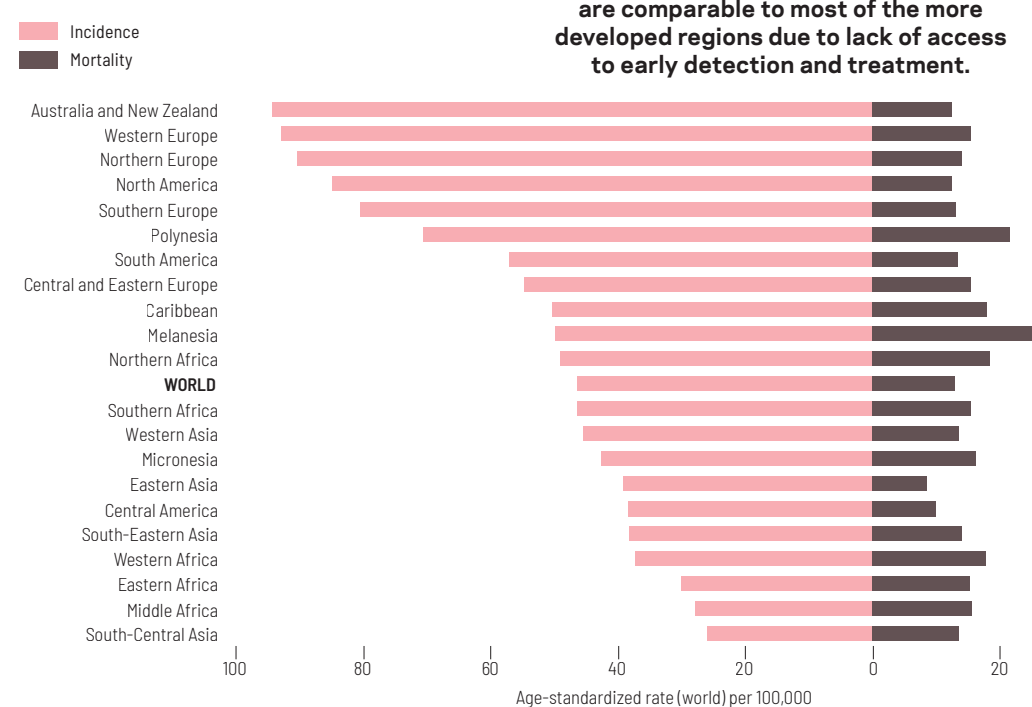


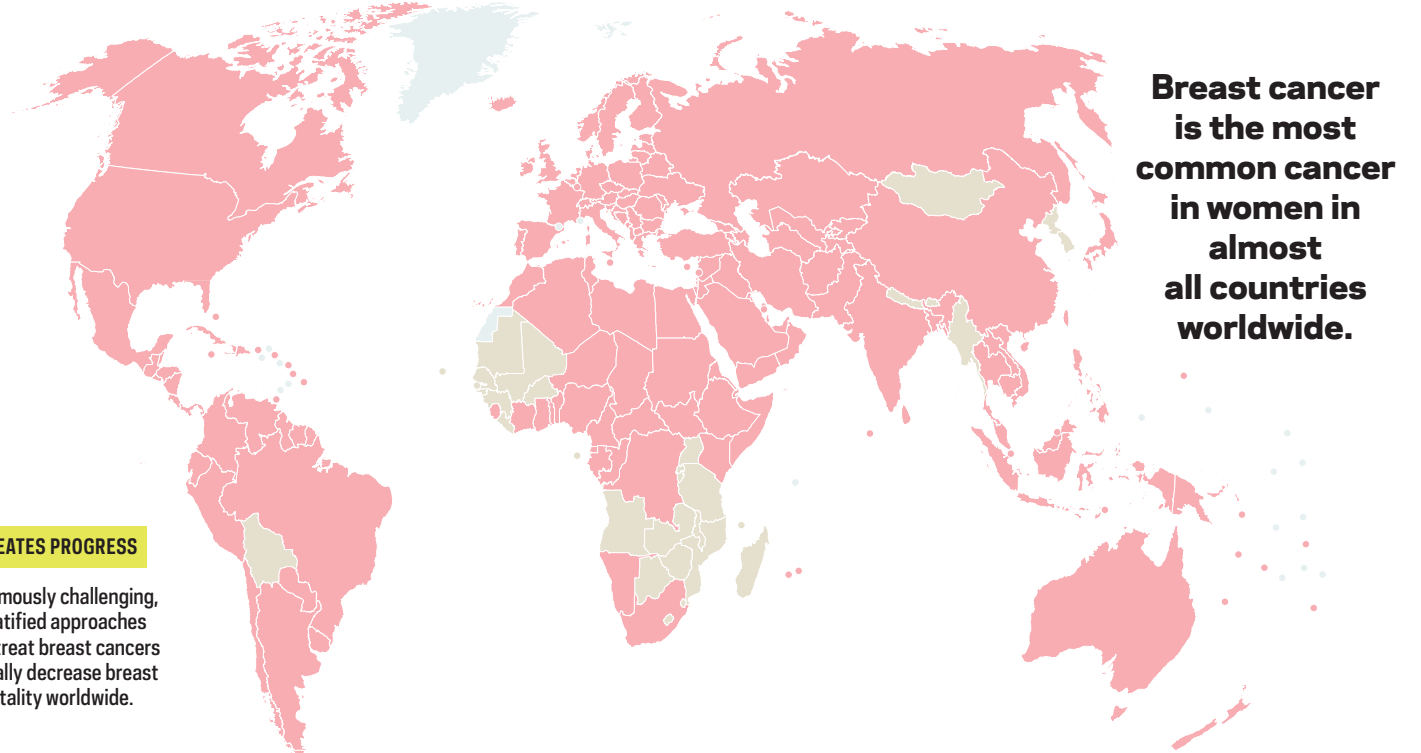
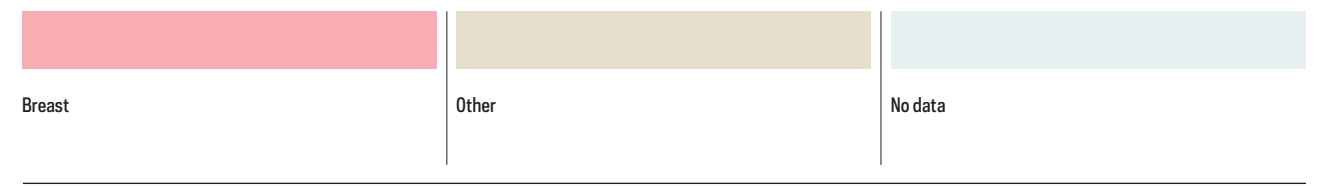
FIGURE 12.2

Female breast cancer incidence and mortality rates, 2018



MAP 12.1

Countries where breast cancer is the most frequently diagnosed cancer in women, 2018



Breast cancer is the most common cancer in women in almost all countries worldwide.

ACCESS CREATES PROGRESS

Although enormously challenging, resource stratified approaches to detect and treat breast cancers can substantially decrease breast cancer mortality worldwide.

FIGURE 12.3

Female breast cancer incidence rates, all ages, 1978-2012, age-standardized rate (world) per 100,000

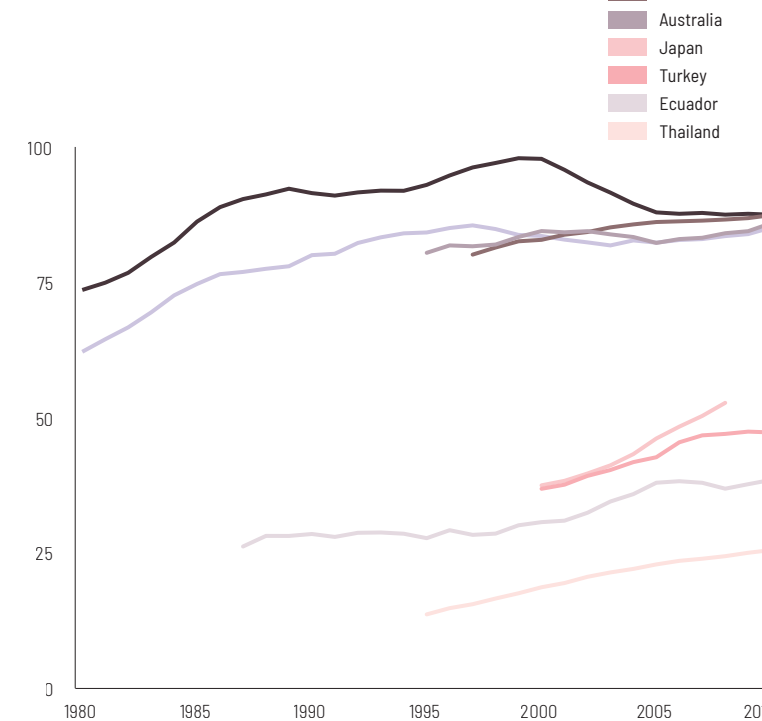


FIGURE 12.4

Female breast cancer mortality rates, all ages, 1950-2013, age-standardized rate (world) per 100,000

