

# Bladder Cancer

## **Bladder Cancer in the U.S.**

Bladder cancer is the sixth most common cancer in the United States. According to the 1998 American Cancer Society, *Cancer Facts & Figures*, an estimated 54,400 people in the U.S. were diagnosed with bladder cancer and the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) reports that 11,757 people died from this disease.

Bladder cancer is most commonly found in white men over age 65. White men get bladder cancer twice as often as non-white men do. Bladder cancer is about two to three times more common in men than women. It is the fourth most common cancer among men and the tenth most common among women. Despite a slow increase in the bladder cancer incidence rate from 1975-1987, the rate has been fairly steady for the last ten years. The mortality rate from bladder cancer has shown a general decline since 1975. Internationally, the incidence of bladder cancer varies about 10-fold. The disease is reported most often in Western Europe and North America and least often in Eastern Europe and several areas of Asia.

In the United States, it is believed that smoking plays a role in almost half of the bladder cancers among men and in a third of cases among women.

## Risk Factors for Bladder Cancer

- In the United States, it is believed that smoking plays a role in almost half of the bladder cancers among men and a third of cases among women. Cigarette smokers are 2-3 times more likely to develop bladder cancer than nonsmokers.
- As early as 1895, it was known that bladder cancer occurred at higher rates among workers exposed to dyestuffs. Two of these chemicals, benzidine and 2-naphthylamine, are now known to be potent bladder carcinogens in humans and are no longer used.
- Today 25% of bladder cancer may still be associated with some occupations, including: rubber and leather workers, painters, drivers of trucks and other motor vehicles, aluminum workers, machinists, chemical workers, printers, metal workers, hairdressers, and textile workers.
- Exposure to arsenic, a naturally occurring chemical in rocks, soil, and the water in contact with them, can increase the risk of developing bladder cancer.

## Prevention of Bladder Cancer

- The single most important thing you can do to reduce the risk of developing bladder cancer is to **stop smoking** all kinds of tobacco (cigarettes, pipes and cigars).
- People in higher-risk occupations should **follow recommendations for protecting themselves in the work place**.
- People using well water for drinking should have it tested for arsenic.

## Early Detection of Bladder Cancer

### Why is it important?

- Cases detected early (local disease) have about a 94% chance of living for at least five more years.
- Cases detected at the distant stage (when disease has spread to another part of the body) have only a 6% chance of living for five more years.

## How to Improve your Chances of Detecting Bladder Cancer Early

There are no screening tests for people who don't have symptoms. If you have any of the following symptoms, you should see your health care provider:

- Blood in the urine (giving it a red or pink color)
- Having to urinate more often than usual
- Repeated bladder infections

## Arsenic in Drinking Water

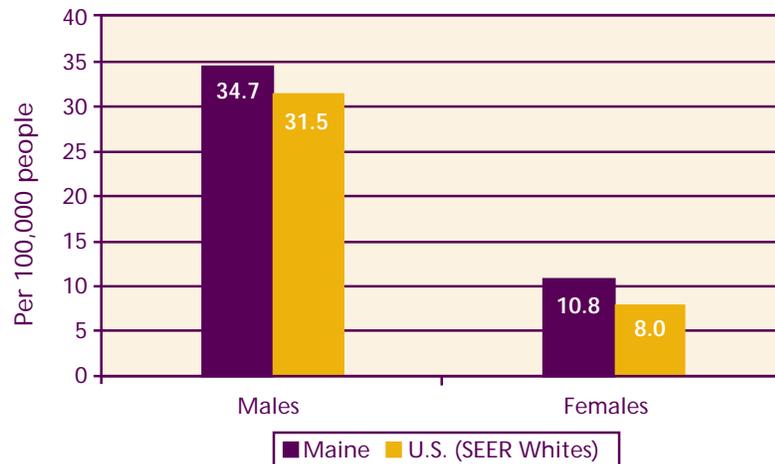
- The EPA recommends arsenic levels below 10 micrograms per liter of water.
- For additional information about testing your water for arsenic, call the **Maine Drinking Water Program at (207) 287-2070**.

## Burden of Bladder Cancer in Maine

- On average 254 men and 108 women each year were diagnosed with bladder cancer from 1997 to 1998.
- 47 men and 24 women each year, on average, died from bladder cancer in Maine.
- Over 80% of bladder cancer cases in Maine occur in men and women over 60 years old.

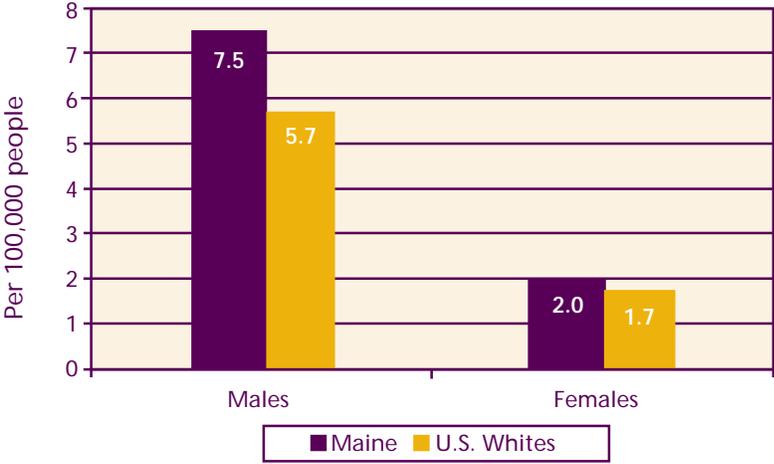
The age-adjusted incidence rate for bladder cancer was statistically higher (more cases) for Maine men and Maine women compared with the U.S.

Age-Adjusted Incidence Rates by Sex, Maine and U.S.  
Bladder Cancer, 1997-1998



The age-adjusted mortality rate for Maine men was significantly higher than the U.S. rate, but no different for Maine women.

Age-Adjusted Mortality Rates by Sex, Maine and U.S. Bladder Cancer, 1997-1998



Bladder cancer is more common in older people. The incidence of bladder cancer is much higher in men than women.

Maine Age-Specific Incidence Rates Bladder Cancer, 1997-1998

