

DOES THE INCIDENCE OF OESOPHAGEAL CANCER VARY BETWEEN ETHNIC GROUPS IN ENGLAND?

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Objectives

This study aimed to investigate the variation in incidence of oesophageal cancer between ethnic groups in England.

Method

Data on patients diagnosed with oesophageal cancer (ICD10 C15) in England between 2001 and 2007 were extracted from the National Cancer Dataset Repository. Ethnicity was classified using self-assigned ethnicity from the Hospital Episode Statistics dataset and ethnic groups were combined into seven categories; White, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Black Caribbean, Black African and Chinese. Male and female age-standardised incidence rate ratios (IRR) were calculated for each ethnic group, using the White groups as the baseline. IRR were calculated for oesophageal cancer and three subgroups: cancers of the upper and middle oesophagus, lower oesophagus and oesophagus with an unspecified subsite.

Results

Ethnicity information was available for 37,248 of 44,307 (84%) patients. In males, the majority of oesophageal cancer occurred in the lower oesophagus, followed by the upper and middle oesophagus, whereas in females similar numbers of cases occurred in these groups. Compared with White men, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Black Caribbean, Black African and Chinese men had a lower incidence of oesophageal cancer. Compared with White women, Bangladeshi women had a higher incidence of oesophageal cancer (IRR 2.0 95%CI[1.2-3.3]), Black African women had a similar incidence (0.9[0.6-1.3]) and Indian, Pakistani, Black Caribbean and Chinese women had a lower incidence. The higher incidence of oesophageal cancer among Bangladeshi women was largely due to a high incidence of upper and middle oesophageal cancer (3.1[1.6-6.0]) compared with women in other ethnic groups. Bangladeshi women had a similar incidence rate to White women for lower oesophageal cancer (0.9[0.4-2.0]).

Conclusion

White men and Bangladeshi women have the highest incidence of oesophageal cancer compared with other ethnic groups of the same sex. The high incidence of upper and middle oesophageal cancer in Bangladeshi women is possibly associated with betel quid and tobacco chewing.