

# Introduction

## Burden of female breast cancer worldwide

Breast cancer is the most common cancer among women worldwide. In 2002, it was estimated more than one million incident breast cancer emerged worldwide where 636,000 incident cases occurred in developed countries and 514,000 in developing countries.<sup>1</sup> Breast cancer is also a leading cause of cancer deaths among women; 373,000 women died of (14% of all cancer deaths among women) breast cancer in 2002.<sup>2</sup>

Globally, incidence rates of breast cancer are higher in North America and Western Europe, followed by South America and Eastern Europe, and lowest in Asia (Figure 1).<sup>3-4</sup> In recent years, the incidence of breast cancer increase in many Asian countries at a more rapid rate than in Western countries<sup>5-8</sup> and becomes the commonest female malignancy in many Asian countries.<sup>9</sup> Among Asian countries, Hong Kong has the highest incidence<sup>10</sup> with crude incidence rate of 59.4 per 100 000 standard population as compared to 59.0 in Singapore, 49.6 in Japan and 20.1 in China.<sup>11-12</sup>

## Female breast cancer in Hong Kong

In Hong Kong, breast cancer becomes a leading cancer in women since 1994. According to Hong Kong Cancer Statistics 2006 figures, crude incidence rate and age-standardized rate of breast cancer were 72 and 52.1 per 100 000 standard population respectively (Figure 2), there were 2,584 women diagnosed of breast cancer in 2006, accounting for 23.5% of all cancers in women, and its incidence doubled in the 1990s, overtaking lung cancer as the number one cancer affecting Hong Kong women (Figure 3a).<sup>11</sup>

On average, more than 7 women were diagnosed with breast cancer every day whereas 4 women were diagnosed with lung cancer daily in 2006. Sixty percent of breast cancer patients were in age 40-59, 10.5% of patients below age 40 with the youngest patient below 20 years old. Cumulative lifetime risk of developing breast cancer was 5% indicating 1 in every 20 women stood a chance of developing breast cancer in lifetime up to age 74. About 10% of female cancer deaths were due to breast cancer during 2006, which ranked as third major cause of cancer deaths in women (Figure 3b).

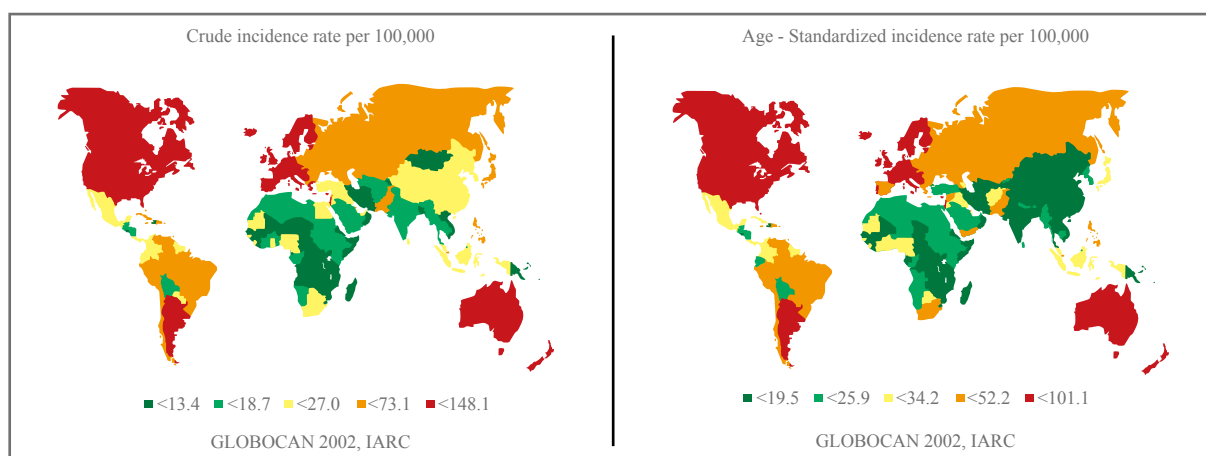


Figure 1. Crude and Age-standardized incidence rate of breast cancer (per 100,000)  
Source: GLOBOCAN 2002

# 引言

## 乳癌：全球女性的健康負擔

乳癌是全球最普遍的婦女癌症。2002年，全球估計共有逾百萬宗乳癌病例，其中636,000宗出現在已發展國家，而餘下的514,000則在發展中國家。<sup>1</sup> 乳癌亦是導致婦女因癌症死亡的主因之一，2002年，共373,000名婦女死於乳癌（佔婦女因癌症死亡個案的14%）。<sup>2</sup>

以全球不同區域比較，乳癌發病率在北美洲及西歐最高，緊接是南美洲及東歐，而亞洲則較低（圖1）。<sup>3-4</sup> 但近年不少亞洲國家的乳癌個案，上升幅度均較西方國家為高<sup>5-8</sup>，乳癌更成為不少亞洲國家的最常見婦女癌症。<sup>9</sup> 在亞洲各國中，香港又擁有最高的乳癌發病率<sup>10</sup>：粗發病率（每十萬人中患上該病症的新個案人數）為59.4，較新加坡的59.0、日本的49.6及中國的20.1均為高。<sup>11-12</sup>

## 本港的婦女乳癌

在本港，乳癌自1994年起已成為婦女最常見的癌症。根據2006年的香港癌症統計數字，乳癌的粗發病率及年齡標準化發病率分別為72 及 52.1（圖2）。共有2,584名女性於2006年確診患上乳癌，佔該年女性患癌數字的23.5%，此發病率較上世紀90年代上升一倍，令乳癌取代肺癌，成為本港婦女最常見的癌症（圖3a）。<sup>11</sup>

2006年，本港平均每天有7名婦女不幸確診患上乳癌，較平均每天4名婦女患上肺癌為多。約六成的乳癌病人年齡介乎40至59歲，約10.5%的乳癌病人年齡在40歲以下，而最年輕的患者不足20歲。本港婦女患癌的一生累積風險為5%，表示每20名婦女中，就有1人在74歲前有機會患上乳癌。2006年，因乳癌導致婦女死亡個案佔所有癌症死亡個案約10%，令乳癌成為本港婦女癌症的第三號殺手（圖3b）。

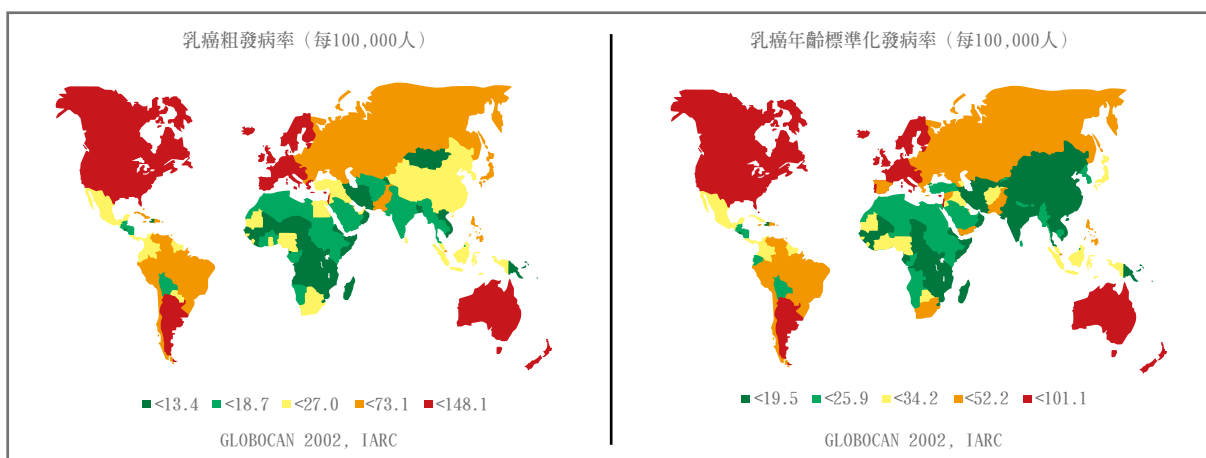


圖1. 全球區域乳癌的粗發病率及年齡標準化發病率（每100,000人）  
資料來源：GLOBOCAN 2002

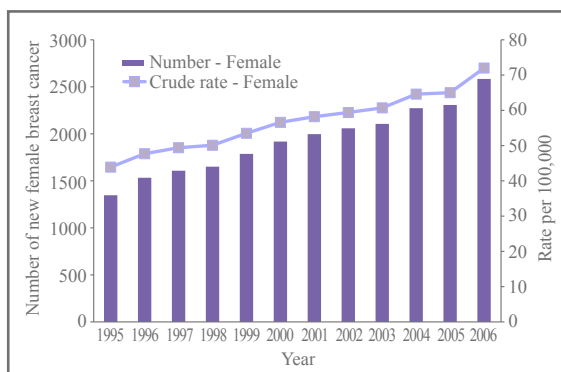
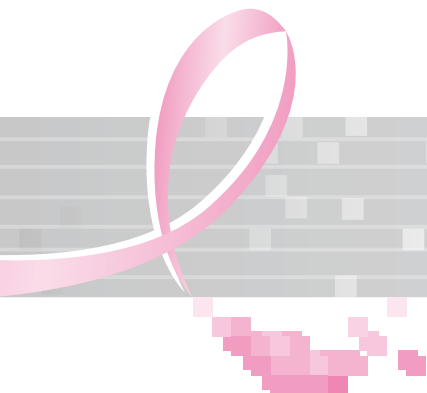


Figure 2. Incidence trend of female breast cancer in Hong Kong, 1995-2006

Source: Hong Kong Cancer Registry

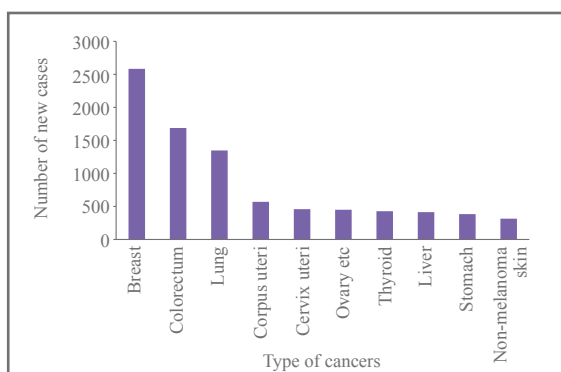


Figure 3a. Top 10 cancers in Hong Kong women, 2006

Source: Hong Kong Cancer Registry

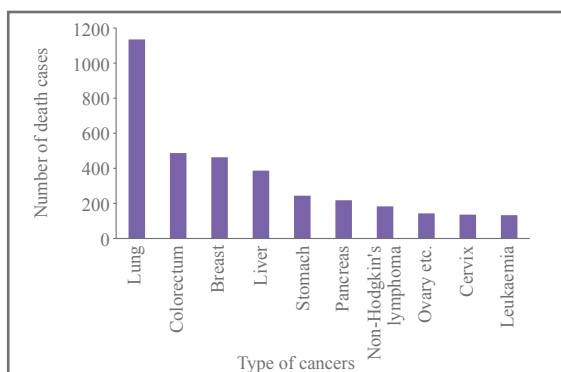


Figure 3b. Top 10 cancers deaths in Hong Kong women, 2006

Source: Hong Kong Cancer Registry

As mentioned, breast cancer is the most common and fastest growing cancer in numbers among women in Hong Kong. Hong Kong tops Asian countries/cities in this regard with one in 4 cancer cases in women being a breast cancer case.

Paradoxically, very little is known about local breast cancer picture. Breast cancer health care management in Hong Kong is currently designed on western data and information. No local, population-wide, breast cancer specific information is available anywhere in the territory. Without such information, which is stored in Cancer Registries elsewhere in the world as the basis for effective cancer control research & development, Hong Kong cannot even start to identify risk factors, disease/treatment trends etc so as to undertake further research to come up with evidence-based local breast cancer prevention and treatment options.

The Hong Kong Government operates a Hong Kong Cancer Registry (HKCR) under the Hospital Authority which focuses on incidence and mortality rates rather than risk factors and disease or detection/treatment trends. In this connection, a population-wide Hong Kong Breast Cancer Registry (BCR) is of great benefit to the community as it collects and captures local data regarding breast cancer. The BCR captures comprehensive information of local breast cancer cases and look into various aspects of this fastest growing cancer in women in Hong Kong in terms of prevalence of risk factors, detection method, disease pattern and treatment trends. Analyses and interpretation could help doctors make more evidence-based decisions on treatment management. Policy makers will have solid local data to formulate policy on early detection and effective control measures of the cancer. Moreover, it could enhance public awareness of breast cancer and facilitate the Government in formulating appropriate, comprehensive healthcare policies to manage the burden of breast cancer to the society in the long term.

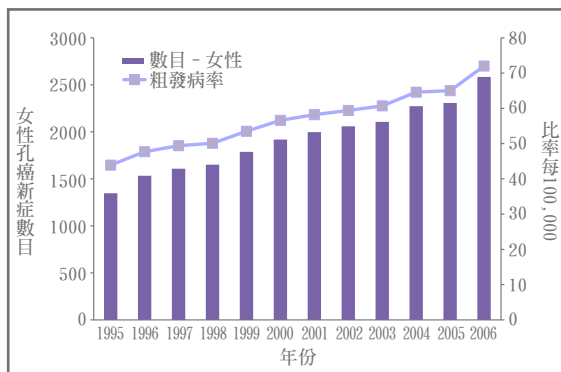


圖2. 香港女性乳癌發病率，1995-2006  
資料來源：香港癌症資料統計中心

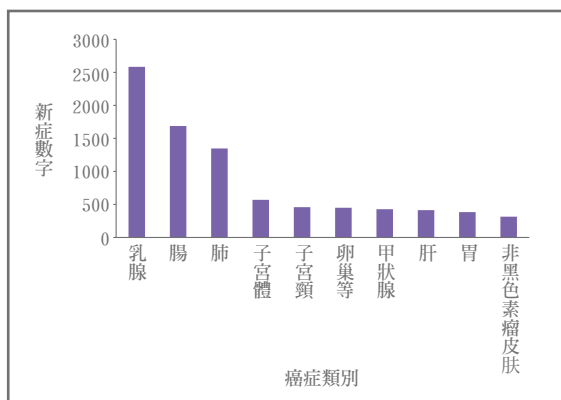


圖3a. 十大香港女性常見癌症，2006  
資料來源：香港癌症資料統計中心

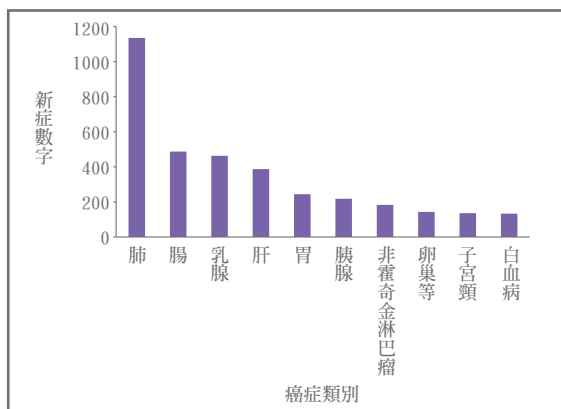


圖3b. 十大引致死亡的香港女性癌症，2006  
資料來源：香港癌症資料統計中心

正如前文提及，乳癌已成為本港婦女最常見及發病率增長速度最快的癌症，每4個婦女患癌個案中，便有1個屬乳癌，比例均高於亞洲其他各國家或城市。

然而，我們對於本地乳癌個案，仍未有確切了解。由於本港一直未有一個以本地個案為標準、全民性及以乳癌為研究中心的資料庫，故有關乳癌護理及治療等的資訊，均建基於西方的數據及資料。相對於香港，世界多國均有搜集本土的乳癌個案資料，並紀錄在當地的癌症資料庫中，以作為研究及制訂有效控制及治療乳癌方案的基礎參考資料。相反，由於本港一直未有這樣的乳癌資料庫，令本港未能對高危因素，以及乳癌或乳癌治療趨勢作深入研究，令有關的防治乳癌研究工作一直未有相關的醫學基礎。

香港醫院管理局轄下的香港癌症資料統計中心，主要統計癌症的發病及死亡率，而非其風險因素、確診及治療方法等。正因如此，一個全民性及全面性的香港乳癌資料庫，將可搜集本地乳癌的詳細數據，從而讓我們對這個增長速度驚人的癌症有更深了解，包括其風險因素、確診方法、疾病模式及治療趨勢等。數據的研究及詮釋，可讓醫生為病人作出治療建議時，有更多實質的本地數據作參考，並顯示出本地乳癌具體發展趨勢，讓制訂公共政策的官員考慮更全面和適當的醫療政策，長遠而言減輕乳癌為社會及病人帶來的負擔。

