

South Africa

Human Papillomavirus and Related Cancers, Fact Sheet 2021 (2021-10-22)

I. Key data on HPV and HPV-related cancers



South Africa has a population of 21.3 millions women ages 15 years and older who are at risk of developing cervical cancer. Current estimates indicate that every year 10702 women are diagnosed with cervical cancer and 5870 die from the disease. Cervical cancer ranks as the 2nd most frequent cancer among women in South Africa and the 1st most frequent cancer among women between 15

and 44 years of age. About 3.2% of women in the general population are estimated to harbour cervical HPV-16/18 infection at a given time, and 64.2% of invasive cervical cancers are attributed to HPVs 16 or 18.

Table 1. Crude incidence rates of HPV-related cancers

| | Male | Female |
|----------------------|------|--------|
| Cervical cancer | - | 35.6 |
| Anal cancer | 0.66 | 0.90 |
| Vulva cancer | - | 1.29 |
| Vaginal cancer | - | 0.62 |
| Penile cancer | 0.72 | - |
| Oropharyngeal cancer | 1.31 | 0.38 |
| Oral cavity cancer | 3.99 | 2.55 |
| Laryngeal cancer | 2.45 | 0.54 |

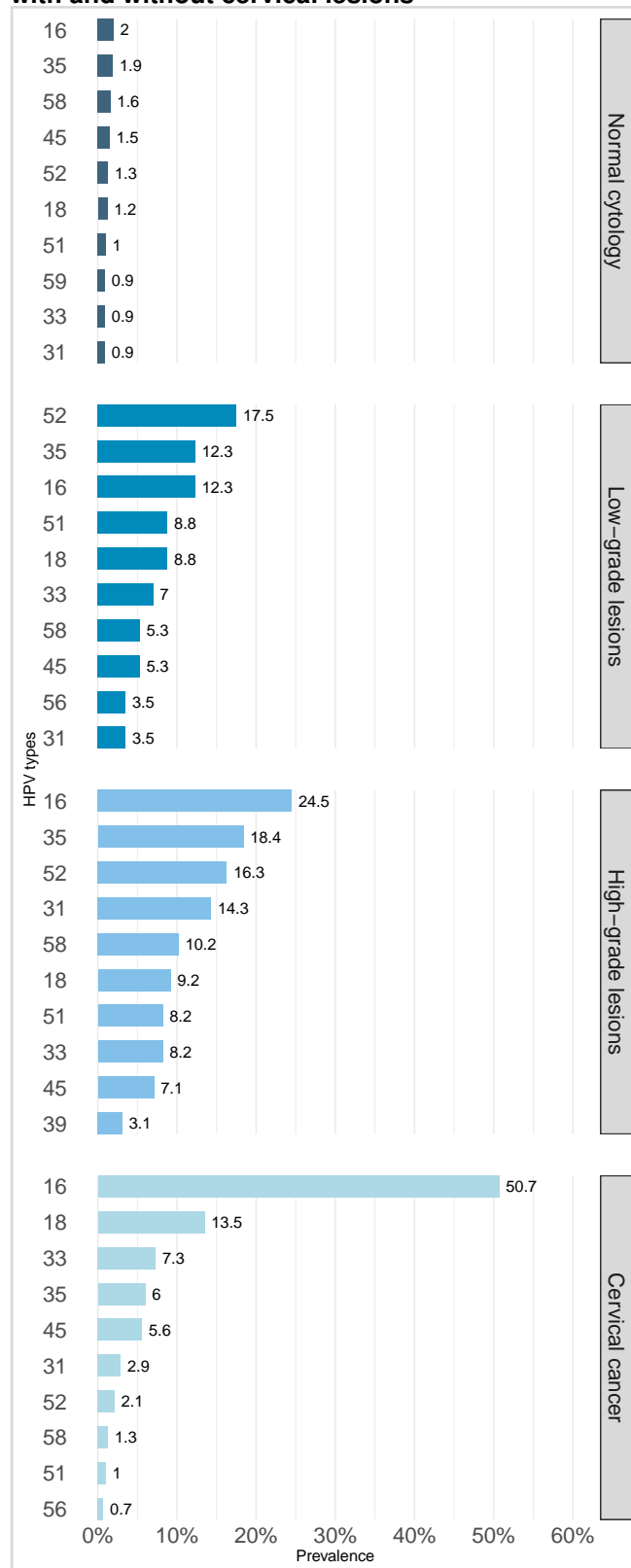
Table 2. Burden of cervical cancer

| | Incidence | Mortality |
|--|-----------|-----------|
| Annual number of new cases/deaths | 10702 | 5870 |
| Crude rate | 35.6 | 19.5 |
| Age-standardized rate | 35.3 | 19.6 |
| Cumulative risk 0-74 years (%) | 3.58 | 2.10 |
| Ranking of cervical cancer (all years) | 2nd | 1st |
| Ranking of cervical cancer (15-44 years) | 1st | 1st |

Table 3. Burden of cervical HPV infection South Africa

| | No. Tested | % (95% CI) |
|-----------------------------|------------|------------------|
| HPV 16/18 prevalence: | | |
| Normal cytology | 8661 | 3.2 (2.8-3.6) |
| Low-grade cervical lesions | 57 | 21.1 (12.5-33.3) |
| High-grade cervical lesions | 98 | 33.7 (25.1-43.5) |
| Cervical cancer | 674 | 64.2 (60.6-67.8) |

Figure 1. Comparison of the ten most frequent HPV oncogenic types in South Africa among women with and without cervical lesions



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II. Complementary data on cervical cancer prevention

Table 4. Factors contributing to cervical cancer (co-factors)

| | |
|--|------------------|
| Smoking prevalence (%) [95% UI], women | 7.9 [6.1-10.1] |
| Total fertility rate (live births per women) | 2.4 |
| Hormonal contraception use (%) | 8.40 |
| HIV prevalence (%) [95% UI] (15-49 years) | 25.8 [22.3-28.6] |

Table 5. Sexual behaviour

| MEN | |
|---|-------------|
| Percentage of 15-year-old who have had sexual intercourse | - |
| Range of median age at first sexual intercourse | - |
| WOMEN | |
| Percentage of 15-year-old who have had sexual intercourse | - |
| Range of median age at first sexual intercourse | 18.2 - 19.2 |

Table 6. HPV vaccine introduction in females

| | |
|--|------------|
| HPV vaccination programme | Introduced |
| Year of introduction | 2014 |
| HPV coverage – first dose (%) (estimation year 2019) | 69 |
| HPV coverage – last dose (%) (estimation year 2019) | 43 |
| HPV coverage – first dose (%) (estimation year 2020) | 3 |
| HPV coverage – last dose (%) (estimation year 2020) | 3 |

Table 7. Cervical screening practices and recommendations

| | |
|---|---|
| Cervical cancer screening coverage, % (age and screening interval, reference) | 19.3% (All women aged 25-64 screened every 3y, WHS 2003 South Africa) |
| Screening ages (years) | Above 30 |
| Screening interval (years) or frequency of screens | 10 years |

Figure 2. Estimated coverage of cervical cancer screening in South Africa, by age and study



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