

IARC and partners launch the third edition of *The Cancer Atlas*, a visual and comprehensive overview of cancer worldwide

Lyon, France/Nur-Sultan (Astana), Kazakhstan, 16 October 2019 – The new edition of *The Cancer Atlas*¹ is being launched today at the World Cancer Leaders' Summit in Nur-Sultan (Astana), Kazakhstan. This publication is produced by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), the specialized cancer agency of the World Health Organization, jointly with the American Cancer Society and the Union for International Cancer Control. Under the banner of "Access Creates Progress", this third edition of *The Cancer Atlas* provides a comprehensive global overview of essential information about cancer. It highlights the current profiles of cancer around the world and the underlying causes of the disease, together with successful strategies to reduce the burden of cancer in all countries.

The book and its accompanying website (<http://canceratlas.cancer.org>) provide simple, intuitive, and downloadable maps, infographics, and messages on global risk factors for cancer and the worldwide burden of cancer. Aimed at a broad readership, this new edition of *The Cancer Atlas* will be a valuable tool for anyone who wants to better understand this complex disease and effective measures for cancer control, including governments, public health agencies, and policy-makers as well as patients, survivors, and the general public.

The Cancer Atlas is an illustrated guide to the diversity of cancer, and a positive vehicle to inspire action against the global cancer epidemic, including the promotion of cancer prevention and the implementation of strategies for cancer control.

IARC Director Dr Elisabete Weiderpass comments, "*The Cancer Atlas* provides not only an immediate grasp of the fundamentals of the cancer burden and its determinants worldwide but also a unique exposition of the array of cancer control actions – from major interventions through to building synergies between health systems and diseases. It is a highly visual overview of global information that tells a compelling story of the potential impact of cancer prevention and control in reducing disparities in cancer, stimulating economic growth, and accelerating sustainable development."

Risk factors

The first section of *The Cancer Atlas* focuses on global variations in the prevalence of key risk factors for cancer, including tobacco use, infections, excess body weight, and exposure to ultraviolet radiation. It also showcases what can be done to reduce the impact of these factors. For example, tobacco use remains the main cause of cancer in most high-income countries, but about 1.5 billion people around the world are now protected by smoke-free legislation, such as bans on smoking in public places. This section highlights

¹ Jemal A, Torre L, Soerjomataram I, Bray F, editors (2019). *The Cancer Atlas*, 3rd ed. Atlanta (GA), USA: American Cancer Society. Available from: <http://canceratlas.cancer.org>.

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the continuing impact of preventable cancers associated with infection in many low-income countries, and the growing importance of excess body weight as a major risk factor for cancer in many parts of the world.

The burden

The second section of the publication explores geographical variations in cancer occurrence, by world region and by level of human development. This new edition of *The Cancer Atlas* includes chapters on global comparisons of cancer survival, the differing profiles of cancer survivors, and the pressing issues of the rising costs of cancer. The impact of inequalities is underlined, and a new chapter on cancer in Indigenous populations assesses the specific challenges facing these underserved populations around the world.

Taking action

The third section of *The Cancer Atlas* examines major interventions for cancer prevention and control at the individual and population levels across the cancer continuum – from the prevention of the underlying causes of cancer to early detection, treatment, and palliative care. It highlights the marked inequities in the access to, availability of, and delivery of interventions worldwide. This section also includes profiles of the many organizations that are working in partnership in cancer control to change the current situation, and stresses the importance of policies and legislation that support effective implementation of interventions. The different approaches that countries can take to attain universal health coverage are also highlighted.

Dr Freddie Bray, who is the head of the Section of Cancer Surveillance at IARC and is one of the editors of *The Cancer Atlas*, notes, “This new edition of *The Cancer Atlas* will be of great value to a broad readership in the fight against cancer. Among the many inequities highlighted in this book are the clear inequities in the availability of primary data to inform action and save lives. To prioritize the most effective interventions and to evaluate their impact, there is an urgent need for robust, relevant, and routinely collected cancer data in every country of the world.”

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The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) is part of the World Health Organization. Its mission is to coordinate and conduct research on the causes of human cancer, the mechanisms of carcinogenesis, and to develop scientific strategies for cancer control. The Agency is involved in both epidemiological and laboratory research and disseminates scientific information through publications, meetings, courses, and fellowships. If you wish your name to be removed from our press release e-mailing list, please write to com@iarc.fr.