MEN'S HEALTH AWARENESS IN ILLINOIS

JUNE 2025

June is Men's Health Awareness Month, and an important time to discuss cancer awareness and factors like prevention, screening, and survivorship. Based on data from the IDPH Illinois Cancer Registry, Illinois men have a higher likelihood of both developing and dying from cancer compared to Illinois women, as well as having higher rates than the United States male average. According to the most recent Illinois data, approximately 12,133 men lost their lives from cancer during 2021, which is a rate of 174.0 per 100,000 men. An estimated 36,592 men were diagnosed with cancer during 2021, which is a rate of 498.0 per 100,000. Recent five-year data trends from 2018-2022 show decreasing mortality rates for men and can be supported with early detection and screening efforts, as well as guiding individuals to quality care and management resources.

Several factors can increase cancer risk, including smoking, alcohol use, obesity, exposure to carcinogens and ultraviolet light, limited physical activity, and unhealthy eating habits.

SCREENING GUIDELINES

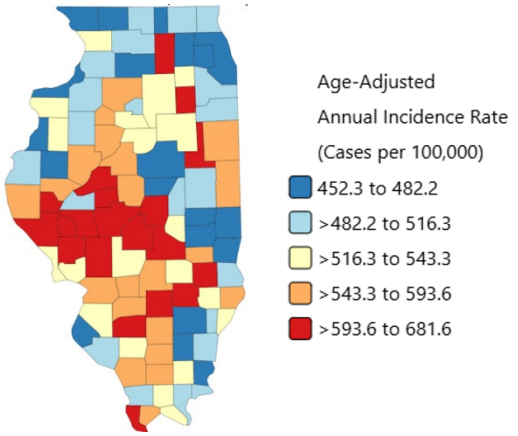
The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommends the following guidelines for cancer screening related to the leading cancer types in men:

- Lung and Bronchus - Annual screening in adults aged 50 to 80 who have a 20-pack/year smoking history and currently smoke or have quit within the past 15 years.
- Prostate – Screening is recommended to be considered for men aged 55 to 69; however, the choice to undergo prostate cancer screening should be an individual one and discussed with a health care provider. Prostate cancer can be identified using a prostate-specific antigen (PSA) blood test, digital rectal exam (DRE), or a prostate biopsy.
- Colon and rectum – Adults aged 45 to 75 should be screened for colorectal cancer. Several screening tests can be used for colorectal cancer, including a fecal occult blood test, sigmoidoscopy, colonoscopy, virtual colonoscopy, or a DNA stool test. A physician should be consulted to determine which test is appropriate.

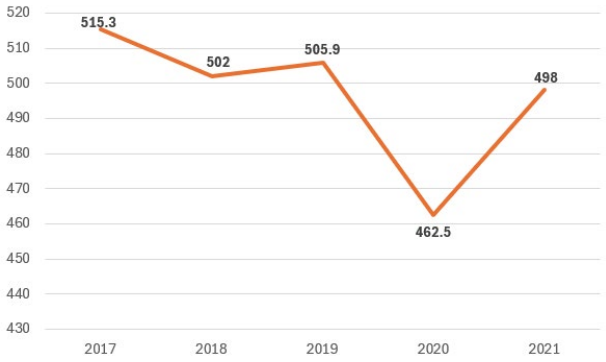
Test or Procedure	Type of Cancer	Age	Frequency
Fecal immunochemical testing (FIT)	Colorectal	45-75	Every year
Fecal occult blood test	Colorectal	45-75	Every year
Multitarget stool DNA	Colorectal	45-75	Every 1-3 years
Sigmoidoscopy	Colorectal	45-75	Every 5 years
Colonoscopy	Colorectal	45-75	Every 10 years
Digital rectal exam	Prostate	55-69	Every 2 years
PSA blood test	Prostate	55-69	Every 2 years
Low-dose CT scan	Lung	50-80	Every year

INCIDENCE RATES

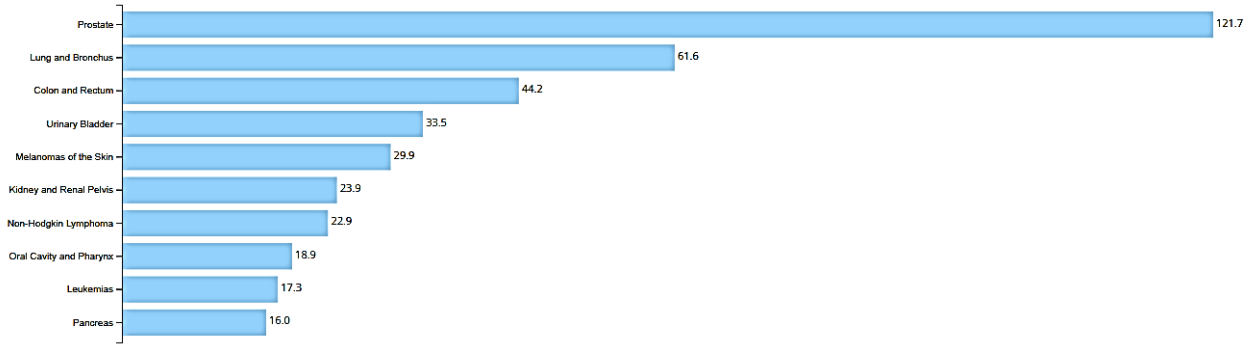
Incidence rates per 100,000 in Illinois, all races and ethnicities, all ages, male, 2017-2021



Age-adjusted incidence rate per 100,000 Illinois men 2017-2021



Top 10 cancers by incidence rate in Illinois, all races and ethnicities, male, 2021



Sources:

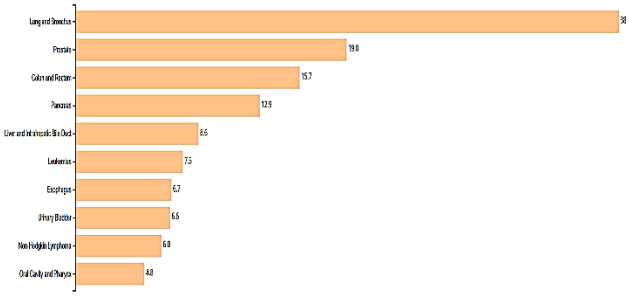
1 State Cancer Profiles. National Cancer Institute
https://statecancerprofiles.cancer.gov/map/map.withimage.php?17&county&001&001&00&1&01&0&1&5&0#results

2. Illinois State Cancer Registry. https://idph.illinois.gov/iscrstats/statebyrace/Show-Statebyrace-Table.aspx?

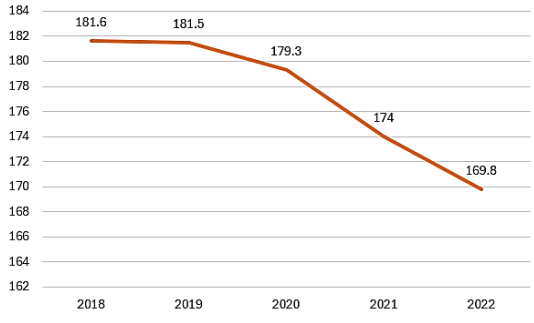
3. U.S. Cancer Statistics Working Group. U.S. Cancer Statistics Data Visualizations Tool, based on 2022 submission data (1999-2021): U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and National Cancer Institute; https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/dataviz, released in June 2024.

MORTALITY RATES

Top 10 cancers by mortality rate in Illinois, all races and ethnicities, male, 2022



Age-adjusted mortality rate per 100,000 in Illinois, male, 2018-2022



Source:

1 U.S. Cancer Statistics Working Group. U.S. Cancer Statistics Data Visualizations Tool, based on 2022 submission data (1999-2021): U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and National Cancer Institute; https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/dataviz, released in June 2024.

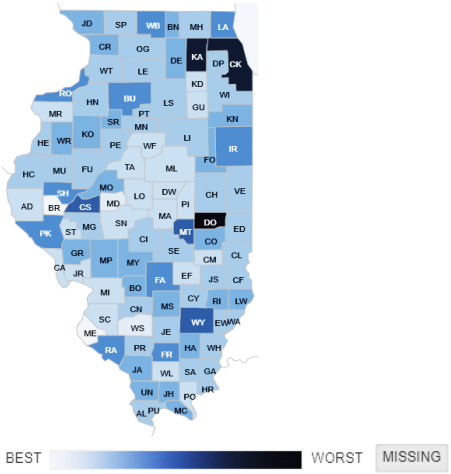
2 Illinois State Cancer Registry. https://idph.illinois.gov/iscrstats/statebyrace/Show-Statebyrace-Table.aspx?

GROUPS AT HIGHEST RISK

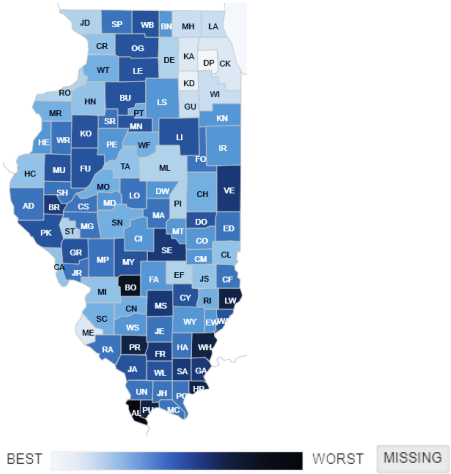
Individual risk profiles vary depending on cancer type, but factors such as increased age and family history are important considerations. Groups at risk for the leading cause of cancer deaths in men, include the following:

- Lung and bronchus – Those with a history of smoking, radon exposure, workplace exposures to asbestos, arsenic, diesel exhaust, and some forms of silica and chromium, a personal or family history of lung cancer, or a history of previous radiation therapy to the chest.
- Prostate – Men of older age; men with a family history of prostate cancer, breast cancer, or with BRCA1 or BRCA2 genetic mutations; and Black men.
- Colon and rectum – Those with a history of being overweight or obese, alcohol and/or tobacco use, family history of colorectal cancer, personal history of colorectal cancer, polyps, or bowel disease, poor diet, and lack of physical activity.

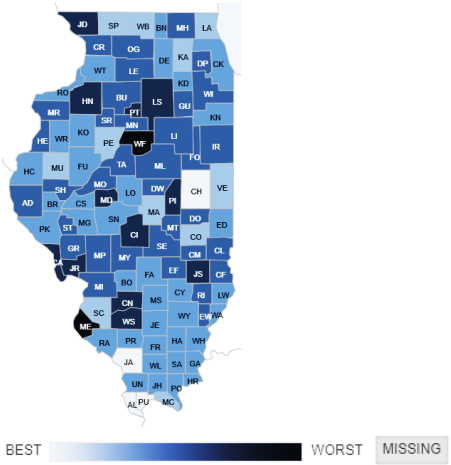
In Illinois, 9% of adults under age 65 did not have health insurance. This ranged from 4% to 13% of adults across all counties.



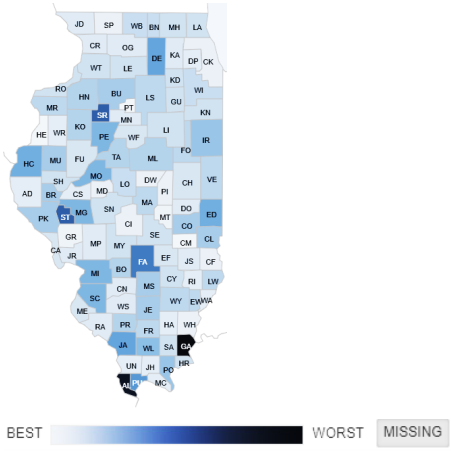
In Illinois, 13% of adults are current cigarette smokers. This ranged from 10% to 23% of adults across all counties.



In Illinois, 19% of adults reported binge or heavy drinking. This ranged from 18% to 24% of adults across all counties in the state.



In Illinois, 5% of people had low incomes and did not live close to a grocery store, limiting their ability to access healthy foods.



Source: Illinois. County Health Rankings & Roadmaps website. https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/health-data/illinois?year=2025

According to 2023 Behavior Risk Factor Surveillance System data, male-specific behavioral data indicates the following:

- Men report higher rates of cigarette smoking, smokeless tobacco use, and electronic cigarette smoking.
- Men report higher rates of alcohol use and binge drinking (5 or more drinks).
- Men report lower rates of having health insurance, having an established health care provider, and having recently been seen for a preventive health care examination.

SUGGESTED POLICY, SYSTEM, AND ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGE STRATEGIES

The following are strategies from the County Health Rankings and Roadmaps.

- Deliver tobacco cessation advice and motivational messages via text or video message.
- Increase support for non-profit health care organizations and deliver comprehensive care to uninsured, underinsured, and vulnerable patients regardless of ability to pay; often called community health centers (CHCs).
- Regulate use of e-cigarettes via age, sales and marketing restrictions, expanded smoke-free air policies in public and private worksites, designated spaces, etc.
- Use websites, computer programs, and other electronic means to provide information, strategies, or behavioral support to tobacco users who want to quit, sometimes with counseling or pharmacotherapy.
- Restrict alcohol availability and use at sporting events, other public events (e.g., concerts and street fairs), and in public spaces such as parks and beaches.
- Provide information and increase motivation to change or prevent problematic alcohol consumption in a short session; also called alcohol screening and brief intervention.
- Increase the price of alcohol via taxes levied on beer, wine, and liquor purchases.
- Offer group educational, social, creative, musical, or physical activities that promote social interactions, regular attendance, and community involvement among older adults.
- Offer exercise classes (e.g., aerobic dance, yoga, Tai Chi, cycling, etc.) and fitness program support in community, senior, fitness, and community wellness centers.
- Establish shared kitchen spaces that support licensed, commercial food processing and connect specialty food processors, farmers, and others who produce value-added goods.
- Build, strengthen, and maintain social networks that provide supportive relationships for behavior change through walking groups or other community-based interventions.
- Establish partnerships between farmers and consumers in which consumers purchase a share of a farm's products in advance.

Source: County Health Rankings & Roadmaps website. https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/strategies-and-solutions/what-works-for-health

RESOURCES

- U.S. Preventive Services Task Force health screening recommendations: https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org/uspstf/recommendation/prostate-cancerscreening
- American Cancer Society
    - Guidelines for Diet and Physical Activity for Cancer Prevention: https://www.cancer.org/cancer/risk-prevention/diet-physical-activity/acs-guidelines-nutrition-physical-activity-cancer-prevention.html

    - Cancer risk self-assessment: https://www.cancer.org/cancer/risk-prevention/cancer-risk-360.html
- Men's Health Network: https://menshealthnetwork.org/
- Prostate Cancer Foundation: https://www.pcf.org/
- Zero Prostate Cancer: https://zerocancer.org/
- Illinois Tobacco Quitline: https://quityes.org/ or 1-866-QUIT-YES
- More information and resources available for specific cancer types at https://dph.illinois.gov/topics-services/diseases-and-conditions/cancer/cancer-awareness-in-illinois.html