

# Incidence of childhood cancer in Latin America and the Caribbean: coverage, patterns and time trends

Thursday, 23 November 2023 09:58 (12 minutes)

**Introduction:** Global childhood cancer control requires high-quality information, which is lacking particularly in low- and middle-income countries.

**Methods:** We described geographical variations in the period 2001-2010 and incidence trends over the period 1993-2012 in the populations under the age of 20 years of the countries in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) using the database of the third volume of the International Incidence of Childhood Cancer study containing comparable data. Age-specific incidence per million person-years (ASR) was calculated for population subgroups and age-standardised (WSR) using the world standard population.

**Results:** Overall, 36 744 unique cases were included in this study. The overall WSR in age 0-14 years was 132.6; the most frequent being leukaemia (WSR 48.7), CNS neoplasms (WSR 23.0), and lymphomas (WSR 16.6). The overall ASR in age 15-19 years was 152.3 with lymphoma ranking first (ASR 30.2). Incidence was higher in males than in females. Incidence was higher in South America compared with Central America and the Caribbean. Compared with combined global data, LAC had higher incidence of lymphomas and the other and unspecified tumours, and lower incidence of CNS neoplasms, neuroblastoma, renal tumours, soft tissue sarcomas, and carcinomas with other epithelial neoplasms. Overall incidence increased by 1.0% per year (95%CI: 0.6,1.3) over 1993-2012.

**Conclusion:** The observed patterns provide a baseline to assess the status and evolution of childhood cancer occurrence in the region. Population coverage with high-quality registries should increase to provide representative and timely data in support of childhood cancer control in LAC.

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**Session Classification:** Oral Presentations