

Public Outcomes Report Bladder Cancer

2019

Based on
2018 data

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There were more than 80,000 new cases of bladder cancer in the United States in the year of 2018, nearly 62,000 (77%) were male, and nearly 19,000 (23%) were female. Bladder cancer generally occurs in older patients, with 90% of those diagnosed being over the age of 55 years old. The average age of diagnosis is 73 years old. It is more commonly diagnosed in those of Caucasian descent.

Urothelial carcinoma, also known as transitional cell carcinoma (TCC), is by far the most common type of bladder cancer. These cancers start in the urothelial cells that line the inside of the bladder. Urothelial cells also line much of the urinary tract, such as the renal pelvis, which is the medial part of the kidney that connects to the ureter, bladder and urethra. Patients with bladder cancer sometimes have tumors in these places, too, so all of the urinary tract needs to be checked for tumors, even after the patient has completed his / her treatment for bladder cancer. The most common treatment options for invasive TCC of the bladder are surgery, chemotherapy (many times we try to do the chemotherapy neo-adjuvantly, or prior to the patient's surgery), radiation therapy and immunotherapy.

There are some rare histologies of bladder cancer. Of the bladder cancers, 1 to 2% are squamous cell carcinomas. Nearly 1% of bladder cancers are adenocarcinomas. Less than 1% are small-cell carcinomas, which often grow quickly and usually need to be treated with chemotherapy like that used for small cell carcinoma of the lung. Sarcomas can start in the muscle cells of the bladder, but they are extremely rare. These less common types of bladder cancer (other than sarcoma) are treated much like TCCs (i.e. surgery and systemic treatment), especially the early-stage tumors but with usually different chemotherapy drugs to match their histology.

Generally, nearly half of all bladder cancers are first diagnosed by Urology while the cancer is only in the inner layer of the bladder wall, when they are **non-invasive** or **in situ cancers** (stage 0 and stage 1). Nearly 30% of bladder cancers have spread into deeper layers of the bladder wall, but still confined to the bladder (stage II). In most of the remaining cases, the cancer has spread to nearby tissues or lymph nodes outside the bladder (stage III). In less than 5% of cases, the bladder cancer has metastasized spread to distant parts of the body (stage IV). Those of African American descent are slightly more likely to have more advanced disease when they're diagnosed, compared to those of Caucasian descent.