

Cancer in American Indian and Alaska Native Communities

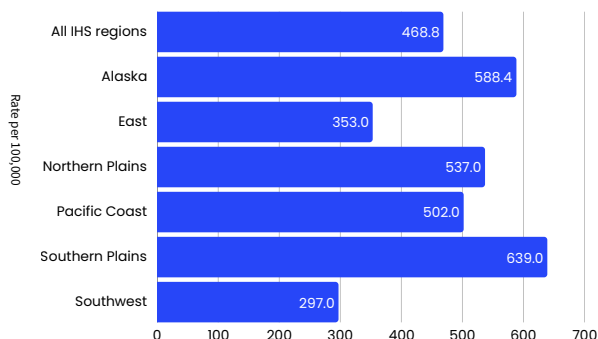


Cancer Facts and Figures 2025 – 2026

In 2020, about 9.7 million people identified as American Indian and/or Alaska Native (AI/AN), representing roughly 3% of the U.S. population.¹ Historical inequities such as limited access to quality care have likely contributed to AI/AN people having the highest cancer incidence and mortality of any racial or ethnic group, for cancers of the colorectum, kidney, liver, lung, stomach, and cervix.²

To address these disparities, AI/AN communities continue to advocate for improved health care, self-governance, and equitable treatment.

New Cancers Diagnoses by Indian Health Service Region, 2018–2022³



Top Cancers Impacting American Indian and Alaska Native Communities:²

Male

1. Prostate
2. Lung
3. Colorectal



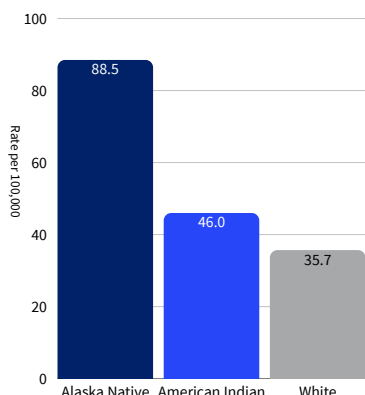
Female

1. Breast
2. Lung
3. Colorectal



Colorectal Cancer Burden⁴

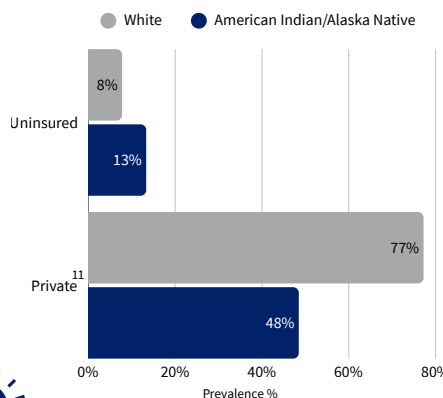
Colorectal Cancer Incidence, Alaska Native, American Indian, and White, 2023



Alaska Native communities have the **highest colorectal cancer incidence rates in the world**, nearly twice as high as American Indian individuals, who rank second in the U.S.

Access to Care⁵

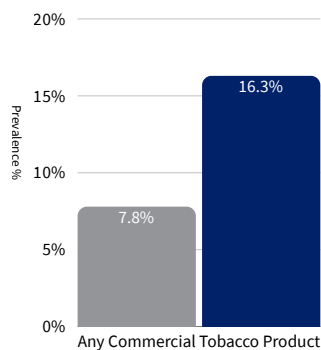
Health Care Insurance Status, AI/AN Individuals, Ages 18 - 64, 2024



Compared to their White counterparts, **AI/AN individuals are more likely to be uninsured**, leaving many without access to care. Consequently, AI/AN communities have a higher prevalence of many chronic health conditions than any other racial or ethnic group.

Cancer Prevention

% Middle and High School Students, Current Commercial Tobacco Products Use, AI/AN vs. White, 2024

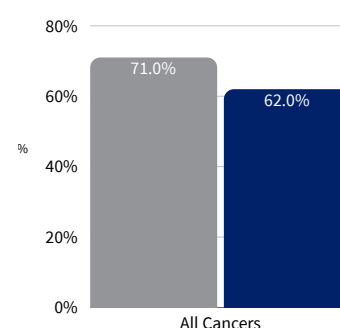


AI/AN individuals are **more likely to use commercial tobacco products than any other racial or ethnic group in the U.S.**⁶ and face a higher risk of death and disease from commercial tobacco products.⁷ Lung cancer mortality rates are 12% higher overall in AI/AN populations compared to White populations.⁸

Cancer 5-Year Relative Survival

Cancer is generally **diagnosed at a later stage in AI/AN individuals** than in White individuals. Partly as a result, **5-year relative survival rates are lower among AI/AN individuals than among White individuals** for all stages combined and for most cancer types.⁹

5-year Survival Rate for All Cancers Combined, AI/AN vs. White, 2015- 2021¹⁰



1. Jones N, Marks R, Ramirez R, Rios-Vargas M. 2020 Census Illuminates Racial and Ethnic Composition of the Country. United States Census Bureau; 2021. Accessed August 12, 2021
2. American Cancer Society. Cancer Facts & Figures 2025. Atlanta: American Cancer Society; 2025. Note: This data is not disaggregated between American Indian and Alaska Native populations.
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Rate of New Cancers by IHS Region, United States, 2018-2022 All Cancer Sites Combined, American Indian and Alaska Native, Non-Hispanic* and White, Non-Hispanic, Male and Female Rate per 100,000 people; Accessed October 31, 2025. To improve accuracy of American Indian and Alaska Native cancer statistics, analyses are restricted to areas with health care services provided by Indian Health Service (IHS). These cancer incidence data are restricted to Non-Hispanic populations residing in PRCA counties (defined in the October 14, 2020 Federal Register) and are grouped at the IHS Region level.
4. Siegel, R. L., Wagle, N. S., Cercek, A., Smith, R. A., & Jemal, A. (2023). Colorectal cancer statistics, 2023. CA: A Cancer Journal for Clinicians, 73(3), 233-254. <https://doi.org/10.3322/caac.21772>
5. National Center for Health Statistics. National Health Interview Survey, 2024. Public-use data file and documentation. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhis/documentation/2024-nhis.html>.
6. Jamal A, Park-Lee E, Birdsey J, et al. Tobacco Product Use Among Middle and High School Students — National Youth Tobacco Survey, United States, 2024. MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2024;73:917–924. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm7341a2>
7. Espey DK, Jim MA, Cobb N, et al. Leading causes of death and all-cause mortality in American Indians and Alaska Natives. Am J Public Health. 2014;104(Suppl 3):S303–S311.
8. Kratzer TB, Jemal A, Miller KD, Nash S, Wiggins C, Redwood D, et al. Cancer statistics for American Indian and Alaska Native individuals, 2022: Including increasing disparities in early onset colorectal cancer. CA Cancer J Clin. 2023 Mar;73(2):120–146. <https://doi.org/10.3322/caac.21757>
9. American Cancer Society. Cancer Prevention & Early Detection Facts & Figures 2025-2026. American Cancer Society.
10. SEER*Explorer: An interactive website for SEER cancer statistics [Internet]. Surveillance Research Program, National Cancer Institute; 2025 Jul 2. [cited 2025 Nov 10]. Available from: <https://seer.cancer.gov/statistics-network/explorer/>. Data source(s): SEER Incidence Data, November 2024 Submission (1975-2022), SEER 21 registries (excluding Illinois). Expected Survival Life Tables by Socio-Economic Standards.
11. In the National Health Interview Survey, private insurance is defined as: *plans marketed by the private health insurance industry. They are not government-run insurance programs. They include policies that cover the costs of doctors and hospitals and those that meet specific needs such as long-term care. Private health insurance policies can be comprehensive or major medical, which provide a broad range of services. Private health insurance also includes plans available through the Federal Health Insurance Marketplace and state-based exchanges*