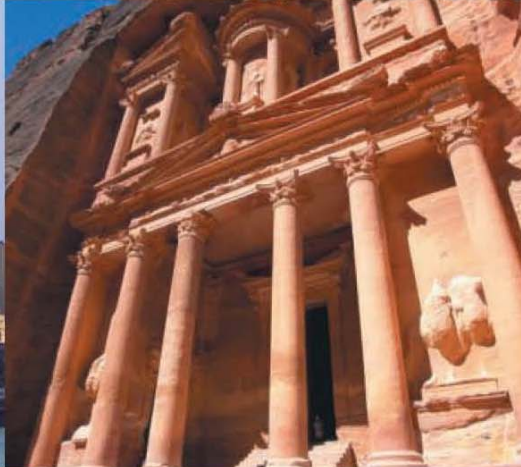


Cancer Incidence in  
Four Member Countries  
(Cyprus, Egypt,  
Israel, and Jordan)  
of the  
Middle East Cancer  
Consortium (MECC)  
Compared with  
US SEER



## NCI Report on Cancer Incidence in Middle East

The National Cancer Institute (NCI), part of the National Institutes of Health, has released *Cancer Incidence in Four Member Countries (Cyprus, Egypt, Israel and Jordan) of the Middle East Cancer Consortium (MECC) Compared with U.S. SEER*. The monograph compiles information on cancer incidence between 1996 and 2001, drawn from cancer registries in four member countries as part of the Joint Cancer Registration Project of the Middle East Cancer Consortium (MECC). The MECC's primary goal is to reduce the incidence and impact of cancer in the Middle East through collaborative research. It was established in 1996 with an official agreement among the Ministries of Health of Cyprus, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, and the Palestinian Authority.

The monograph includes information on the study population, how data were collected, interpretation of the data, and the strengths and limitations of the data. For comparative purposes, tables and graphs show cancer incidence rates from the MECC registry regions and the Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results (SEER) registry program in the United States. Three additional registries – in Gaza, the West Bank in the Palestinian Authority, and in Turkey – also participate in the MECC Cancer Registration Project. Data from these registries will likely be included in future MECC publications.

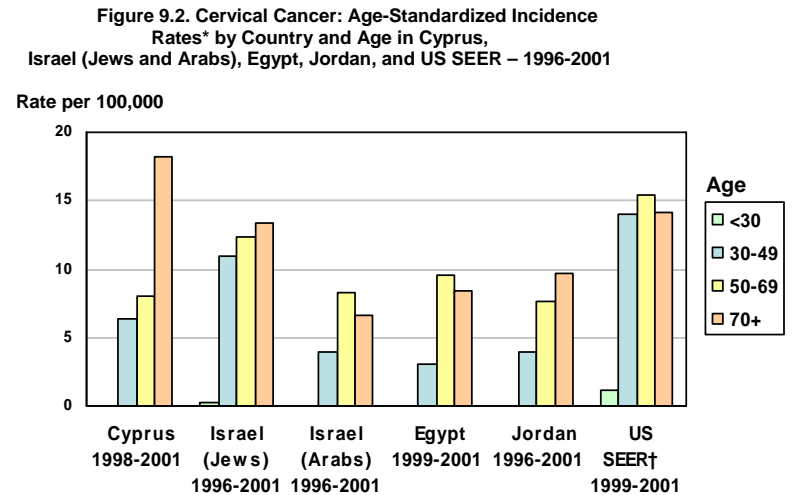
“This project represents a decade of hard work and collaboration between scientists from each of these countries and is a model for international scientific collaboration in troubled regions of the world,” said Laurence Freedman, Ph.D., director, Biostatistics Unit, Gertner Institute for Epidemiology, Sheba Medical Center, lead author and chair of the MECC's Steering Committee for Joint Cancer Registration.

Major findings in this monograph include the following:

- Jordanians had the lowest overall incidence of cancer, while the United States SEER population and Israeli Jews had substantially higher overall cancer incidence rates than in the other MECC populations.
- While overall lung cancer incidence was much lower in the MECC populations than in the U.S. SEER population, the rates were comparable to U.S. SEER rates in Israeli Arab men younger than 60, who are known to have high tobacco consumption.

- Liver cancer incidence rates in Egyptians were five to seven times as high as those of the other MECC populations, and more than three times the U.S. SEER population. This may be related to the higher prevalence of hepatitis B and C in the population or to contamination of food by aflatoxin, a toxin produced by many species of fungi.

Sample graph from the chapter on cervical and corpus uterine cancer:



\*Rates are per 100,000 and are age-standardized to the World Standard Million.  
 † SEER 13 Registries, Public Use Data Set, from data submitted November 2004.

**Citation:** Freedman LS, Edwards BK, Ries LAG, Young JL (eds). *Cancer Incidence in Four Member Countries (Cyprus, Egypt, Israel and Jordan) of the Middle East Cancer Consortium (MECC) Compared with U.S. SEER*. National Cancer Institute. NIH Pub. No. 06-5873. Bethesda, MD.

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The monograph is available at the SEER Web site at <http://seer.cancer.gov/publications> and on the MECC Web site at <http://mecc.cancer.gov>, under Cancer Registry Project.