Lung Cancer Mortality Is on the Rise Among Women

By 2030, women around the world will be more likely to die of lung cancer than breast cancer.

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Breast cancer is currently the leading cause of cancer mortality among women worldwide. But according to new findings published in Cancer Research, lung cancer mortality in women is expected to increase 43 percent and surpass breast cancer mortality by 2030, reports Healio. Lung cancer is already the leading cause of cancer death for women in the United States.

For the study, researchers projected lung and breast cancer mortality until 2030 in 52 countries (29 in Europe, 14 in the Americas, seven in Asia and two in Oceania). Age-standardized mortality rates per 100,000 person-years were calculated for 2008 through 2014 and projected for 2015, 2020, 2025 and 2030.

Overall, the median global age-standardized mortality rate for lung cancer was projected to increase from 11.2 per 100,000 person-years in 2015 to 16.0 in 2030. Breast cancer mortality rates, however, are expected to decrease worldwide from 16.1 in 2015 to 14.6 in 2030.

Lung and breast cancer mortality rates are also likely to be higher in high-income countries than in middle-income countries, where lung cancer mortality is expected to surpass breast cancer mortality before 2030. What’s more, it’s projected that Europe and Oceania will have the highest lung cancer mortality rates in 2030, and the Americas and Asia will have the lowest.

“Our results are very important for current smoking women because there is a delay of around 30 to 40 years between the habit of smoking and the development of lung cancer,” said study author José Martínez-Sánchez, PhD, MPH, BSc, director of public health, epidemiology and biostatistics at the International University of Catalonia in Barcelona. “For this reason, we could break this trend, empowering and helping women to stop smoking.”

Researchers plan to examine how the implementation of smoking cessation and lung cancer screening among women could help reduce lung cancer mortality.

Because, as Martínez-Sánchez says, “if we don’t work to reduce the impact of lung cancer among women we will know, in the [near] future, there will be women who overcome breast cancer but died of lung cancer.”
Click here to learn about how lung cancer rates are now higher in young American women than men.

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