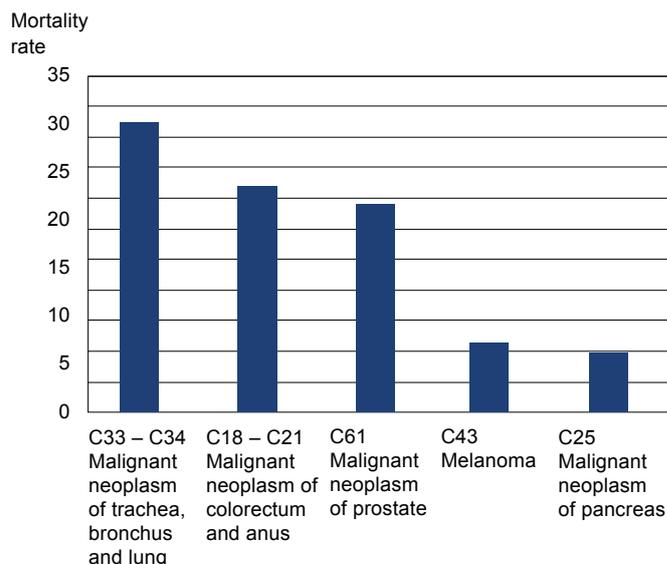




- Prostate cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in New Zealand men, with nearly 3000 men diagnosed in 2008.
- It is the third most common cause of cancer-related death after lung and colorectal cancers.
- There is evidence that testing men for prostate cancer who are without symptoms saves some lives.
- Men at higher risk are encouraged to talk with their doctor about the benefits and possible harms of testing from the age of 40 years.
- Testing men older than 75 years is likely to cause more harms and have fewer benefits.
- Men are encouraged to make an informed choice as to whether testing is right for them.
- Any discussion between a man and his doctor should include both the benefits and possible harms with testing.

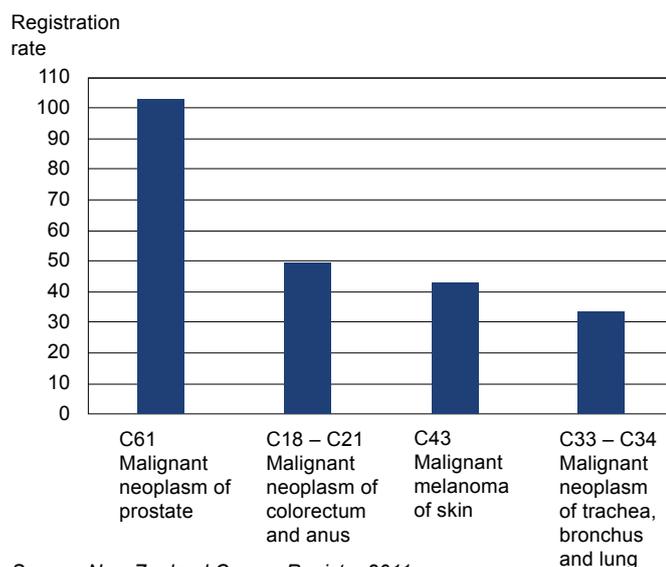
## Mortality rates for the leading cancer sites in men 2008



Source: New Zealand Cancer Registry 2011

Note: The rate shown is the age-standardised rate per 100,000 male population, standardised to the WHO world standard population.

## Registration rates for the leading cancer sites in men 2008



Source: New Zealand Cancer Registry 2011

Note: The rate shown is the age-standardised rate per 100,000 male population, standardised to the WHO world standard population.

The benefits of testing men who do not have symptoms for prostate cancer, has been debated for many years. Tests that help diagnose prostate cancer are available. However, there is no national screening programme in place in New Zealand. Current research shows that there is some evidence of a lower death rate from prostate cancer for some men following testing with the prostate specific antigen (PSA) test. However, the PSA test is not considered a suitable test for a general population screening programme as the probable harms of screening using this test, outweigh the possible benefits.

Whether or not to be tested for prostate cancer is a matter of individual choice, there is no clear right or wrong answer. Men, particularly those at higher risk, are encouraged to discuss being tested for prostate cancer with their doctor. The discussion should also include:

- the individual's risk factors for the disease
- the chances of being diagnosed with prostate cancer
- the possible treatment options that may be offered should the test be positive
- the possibilities of false positive and false negative results

This will enable men to make an informed choice as to whether or not testing is right for them.

Any decision to test should be made as a shared, informed decision between a man and his doctor. A man's values, understanding and acceptance of risk, and other personal preferences should be taken into account. Any man is entitled to ask for a second opinion should he feel unable to make an informed choice with his own doctor.

All of the Society's information is regularly reviewed and updated as new research and information becomes available.

## Testing for prostate cancer screening position statement

For further information:

[http://www.cancernz.org.nz/assets/files/docs/position-statements/Testingfor%20Prostate%20Cancer\\_30Sep2011.pdf](http://www.cancernz.org.nz/assets/files/docs/position-statements/Testingfor%20Prostate%20Cancer_30Sep2011.pdf)

Contact: Sarah Penno, Screening & Early Detection Advisor 04 494 7191

Or contact the Cancer Information Helpline **0800 CANCER (226 237)**.