

Study uncovers clues to rise in uterine cancer death rates

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A rare but aggressive kind of uterine cancer appears to be driving an increase in U.S. deaths from the disease, particularly among Black women, researchers reported Thursday.

Over eight years, deaths from the aggressive type rose by 2.7% per year,

while deaths were stable for the less aggressive kind, their study found. Black women had more than twice the rate of deaths from uterine cancer overall, and of the more aggressive type, when compared to other racial and [ethnic groups](#).

The aggressive kind—called Type 2 [endometrial cancer](#)—is more difficult to treat. By the end of the study period, it accounted for about 20% of cases and 45% of deaths.

"For most cancers, there have been improvements over the last 20 years. It's alarming that we haven't had the same success with uterine cancer," said Dr. Pamela Soliman of MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston, who was not involved in the study.

"This allows us to focus our efforts on specific areas that could potentially have a bigger impact on mortality," Soliman said.

An estimated 65,950 new cases of uterine cancer will be diagnosed in the U.S. this year and 12,550 women are expected to die from it. Irregular bleeding can be a [warning sign](#), but there is no recommended screening test.

Researchers analyzed U.S. cancer data for women 40 and older. They found overall uterine cancer death rates increased by 1.8% per year from 2010 to 2017.

Annual rates increased 3.4% among Asian women, 3.5% among Black women, 6.7% among Hispanic women and 1.5% among white women. (The researchers adjusted for hysterectomy rates, which vary by race. Women who've had their wombs removed cannot get uterine cancer.)

Obesity is a risk factor for the less aggressive [uterine cancer](#), but there's no clear risk factor for the more aggressive kind, said the National

Cancer Institute's Megan Clarke, who led the study, published in the journal *JAMA Oncology*.

"We think it is something that is more common in Black women and increasing in the population for all women," Clarke said. "It's very puzzling and concerning."

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