

BREAST CANCER: REASONS WHY THEY PRESENT LATE. OUR EXPERIENCE IN BENIN

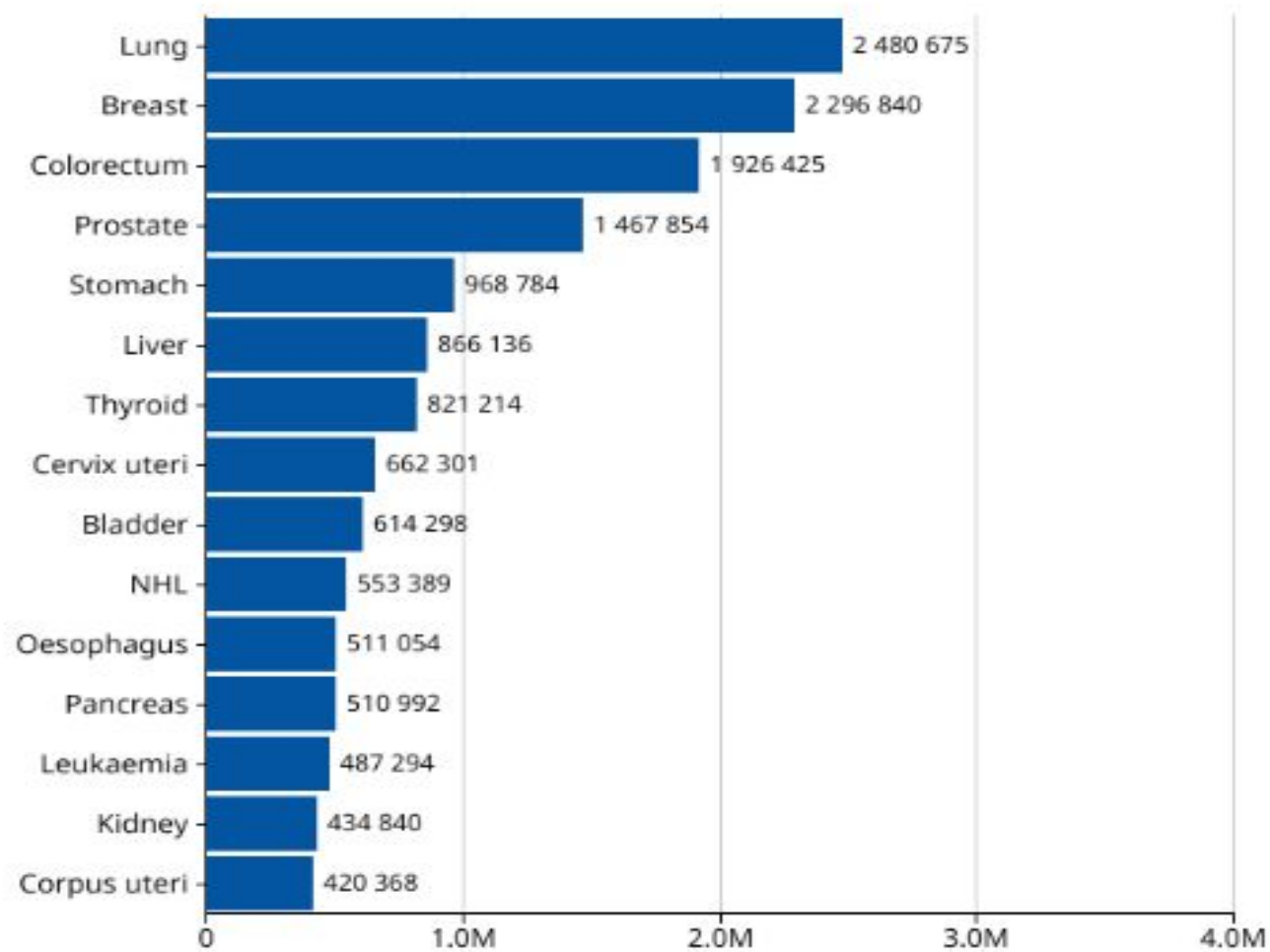
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Absolute numbers, Incidence, Both sexes, in 2022

World

(Top 15 cancer sites)

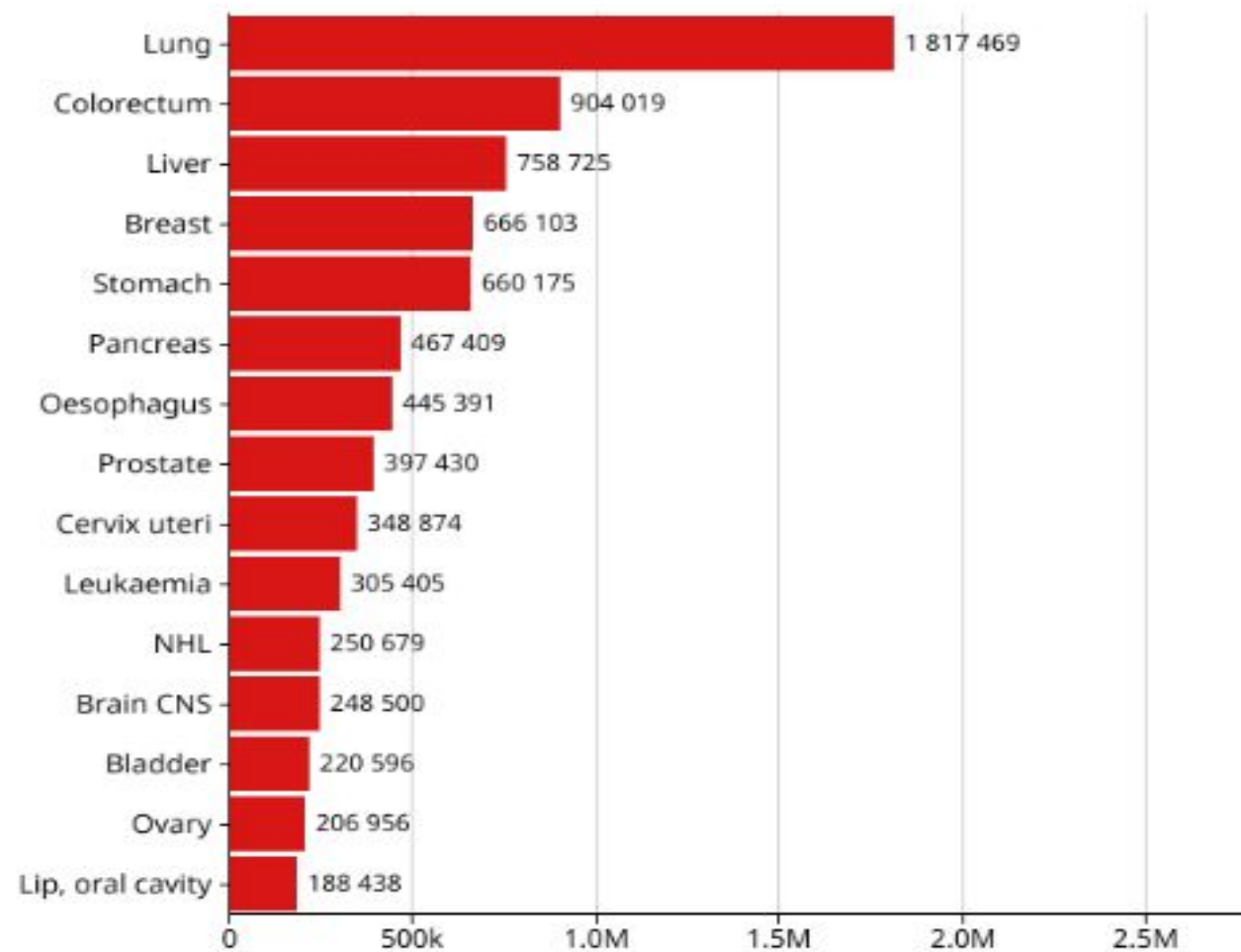


Number (in millions)

Absolute numbers, Mortality, Both sexes, in 2022

World

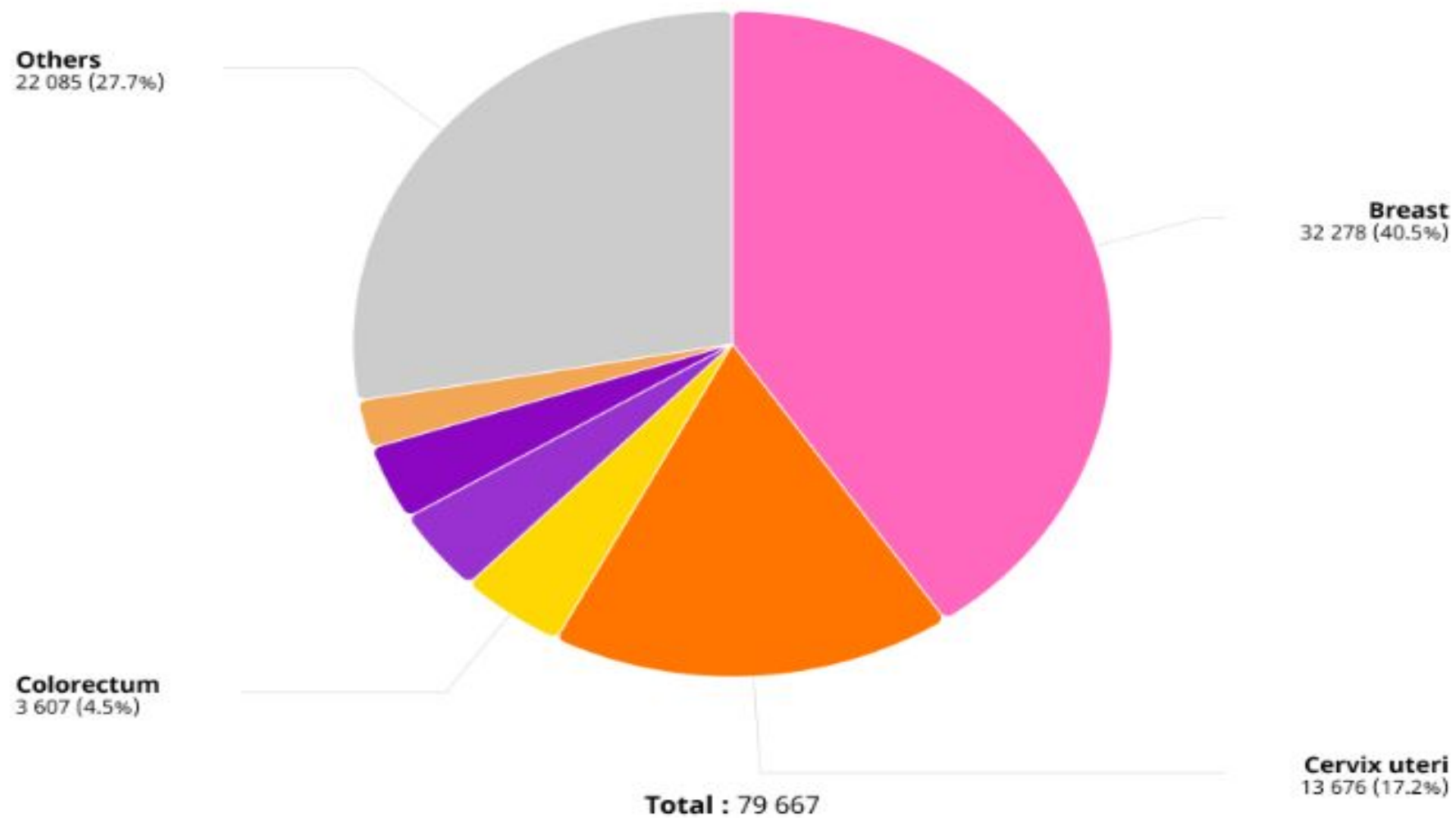
(Top 15 cancer sites)



Number (in millions)

Absolute numbers, Incidence, Females, in 2022

Nigeria



INTRODUCTION

- Breast Cancer is the second most common cancer and fourth cause of cancer death worldwide.
- More prevalent in the western world
- Mortality is more in the LMIC and among blacks, Nigeria inclusive
- Worldwide mortality figures has a significant contribution from LMIC
- In Nigeria, Breast cancer is the most common cancer
- Greater than 70% of breast cancer in Nigeria present late
- Late presentation simply means when the cancer is no longer confined to the breast at the time the patient come for care









CAUSES OF LATE PRESENTATION

- **Ignorance**

- **Fear of Surgery/Mastectomy**

- Ignorance – lack of knowledge of breast cancer and the fact that it usually present with an initial painless lump seems to compound the ignorance of this disease
- Fear of Surgery/Mastectomy – these patient may have initial contact with the health facility but decline treatment due to the fear of surgery only to present later in the advanced stage of the disease

CAUSES OF LATE PRESENTATION

- Stigmatization
 - Use of alternative therapy
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- Stigmatization – the stigma(real or apparent) of having a disease in the breast, loosing a body part and rejection by spouses contribute significantly to late presentation. This stems for sociocultural and religious beliefs of our society.
 - Use of alternative therapy – this covers all non validated therapies for breast cancer including “food supplements”, herbal concoctions and other products that have being claimed to be effective for the treatment for breast cancer

CAUSES OF LATE PRESENTATION

- Resort to/Belief in Spiritual healing
 - False reassurance by medical/non- medical personnel
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- Resort to/Belief in Spiritual healing – this is due to belief that the cause of breast cancer is “spiritual” and some religious leaders claiming they have the powers to cure breast cancer.
 - False reassurance by medical/non- medical personnel – there remains a few who reassure patients that there no cause for alarm based on their ignorance of the standard therapy for breast cancer.

CAUSES OF LATE PRESENTATION

- Financial constraints
 - Family refusal of treatment in the hospital
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- Financial constraints – this due to poverty, misplaced priority and the lack of support systems for those who have breast cancer. Out of pocket payment makes it difficult to meet with the financial demands of treatment of breast cancer
 - Family refusal of treatment in the hospital – the family of breast cancer may be the one responsible for the decision regarding care and their refusal to make the right decision may affect the presentation of breast cancer patient

CAUSES OF LATE PRESENTATION

- Poor referral systems
- Need to complete family size
- Poor referral systems – delays in referring patient for care by physicians who made the first contact with the patients and delays within care facility can impact on the stage of breast cancer at presentation

CAUSES OF LATE PRESENTATION

- Need to complete family size – common among breast cancer diagnosed in young women. This is usually in ‘collaboration’ with their spouses and by the time they are ready to commence treatment they are in the advanced stage of the disease
- Others – Self denial, Pregnancy, breastfeeding and discouragement by friends and relatives

HOW DO WE REVERSE THIS TREND?

- Public enlightenment
- Screening programs
- Establishment of support system by government, NGOs and individuals
- Health Insurance scheme

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