

Strengthening Communities Through Partnership

“Focus on Colo-Rectal Cancer”

NYSACHO, 10.23.2025

Parul J. Shukla

MD, MS(Gen Surg), FRCS(Glasg), FACRSI(Hon), FACS

Regional Chief for Westchester

Colon & Rectal Surgery, Northwell Health

Professor of Surgery

Donald and Barbara Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell



Agenda Items



- Introduction
- Defining the problem of EO-CRC
- Partnering with Health Authorities
- Next steps



Introduction

Northwell Health is a nonprofit integrated healthcare network that is New York State's largest healthcare provider and private employer, with more than 105,000 employees.^[1]

The system now comprises 104,000 employees operating across New York and Connecticut

Northwell Health and Nuvance Health today announced the two nonprofit health systems have officially joined together to form a new integrated regional health system that will enhance care for communities across greater New York and Connecticut, serving a population of more than 13 million.

The integrated system, with a combined \$22.6 billion operating budget, now encompasses over 104,000 employees, a diverse network of 22,000 nurses and 13,500 providers at 28 hospitals, more than 1,050 ambulatory care and 73 urgent care locations while tapping into the world-class expertise of the [Feinstein Institutes for Medical Research](#), visionary [Donald and Barbara Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell](#) and the Hofstra Northwell School of Nursing and Physician Assistant Studies.

Phone

(888) 321-DOCS

Call or click to schedule an appointment



Request an appointment



Northwell Health®



Hospitals



Affiliate Hospitals



Strategic Alliance
Hospitals



Lenox Health
Greenwich Village



Manhattan Eye, Ear
& Throat Hospital



Over 550 ambulatory
& physician offices,
Insurance provider,
Home care,
Long-term care,
Hospice care





Defining and identifying the problem

US TRENDS IN CANCER INCIDENCE BY AGE & SEX, 1998-2021

- Opposing trends among <50 compared to >50



“It is possible that this birth-cohort effect of increased colorectal cancer risk may extend even beyond younger ages...multiplier effect in combination with established risk factors”

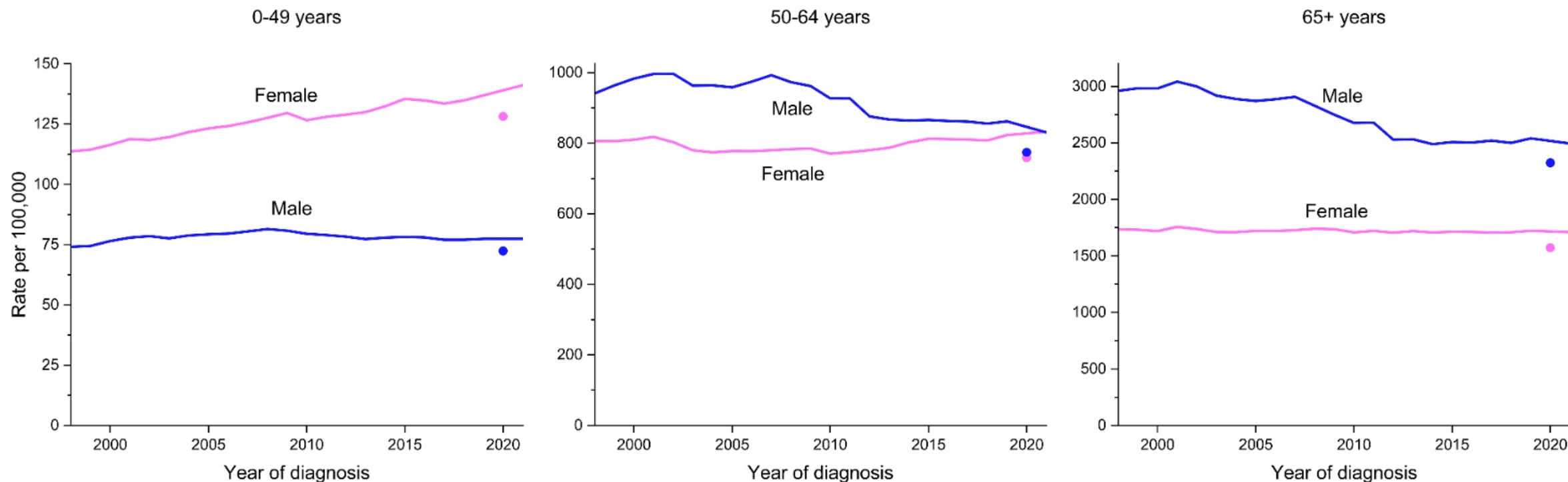


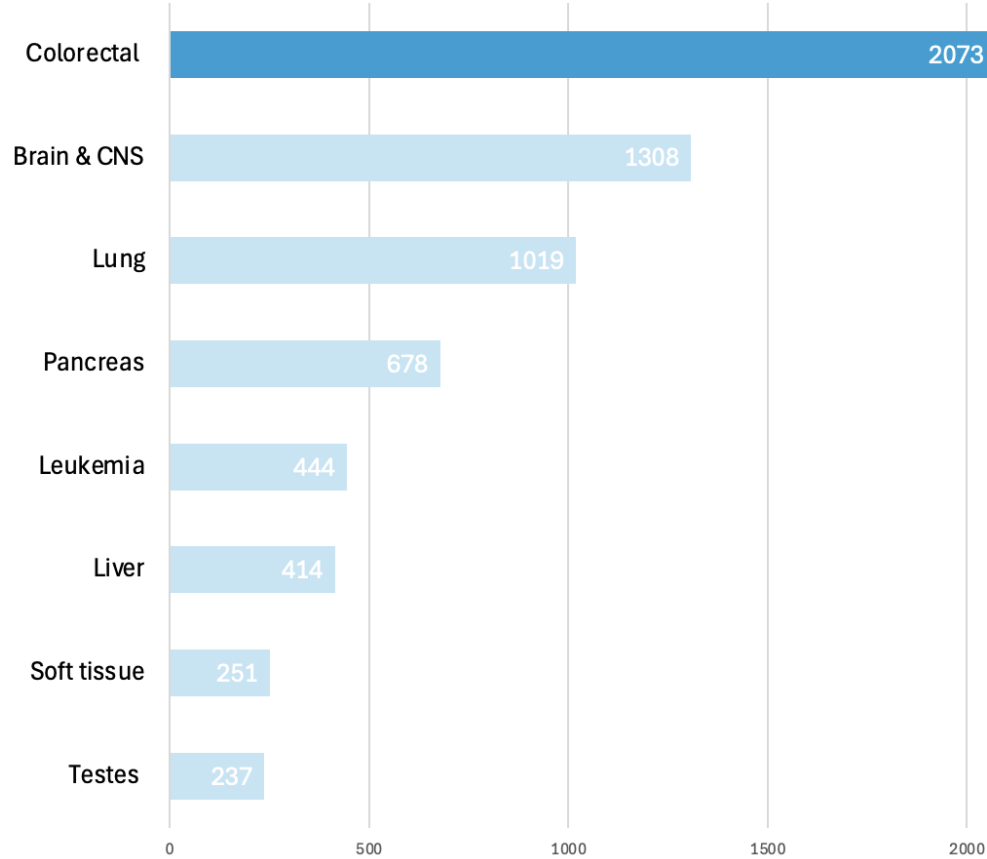
FIGURE 3 Trends in cancer incidence by age and sex, United States, 1998–2021. Rates are age adjusted to the 2000 US standard population and adjusted for delays in case reporting. Data for 2020 are shown separate from trend lines.

LEADING CAUSE OF CANCER DEATH IN THE US, 20

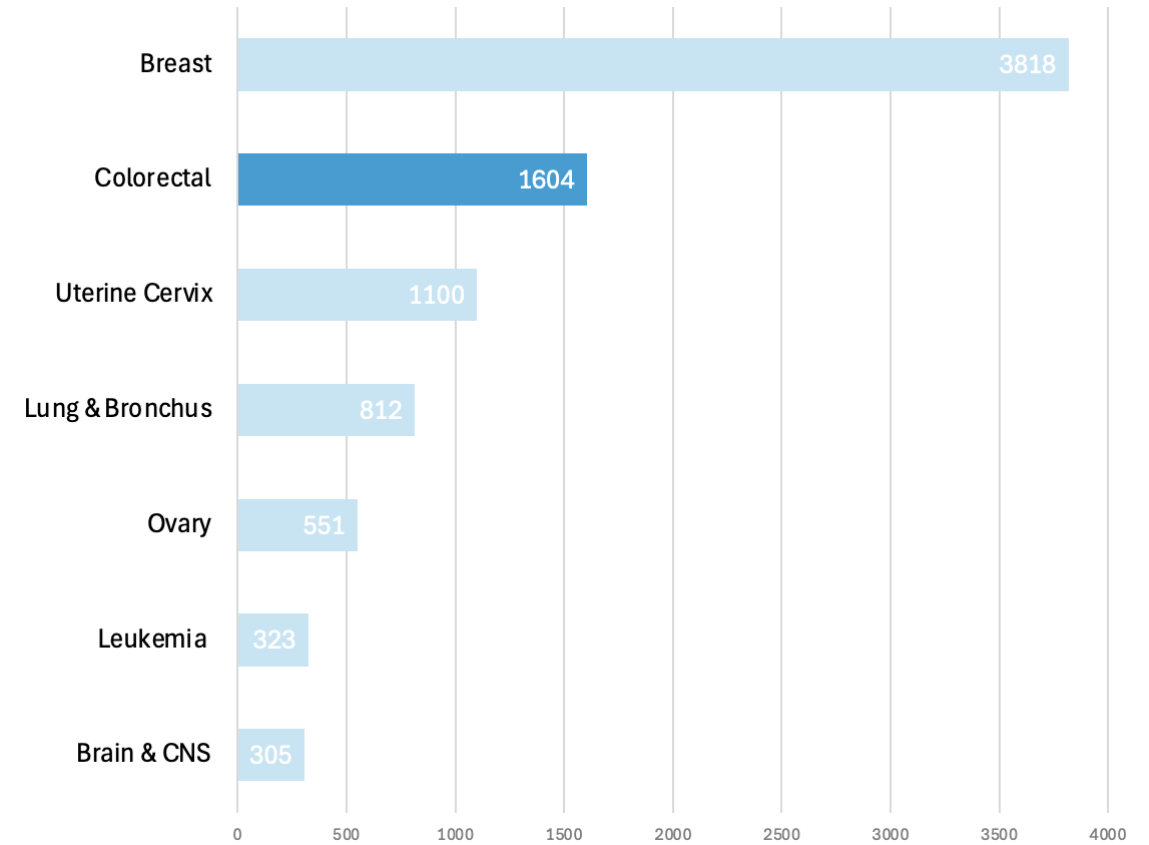
- #1 among young men, #2 among young women



LEADING cause among MALES, 20-49 years old



SECOND LEADING among FEMALES, 20-49 years old

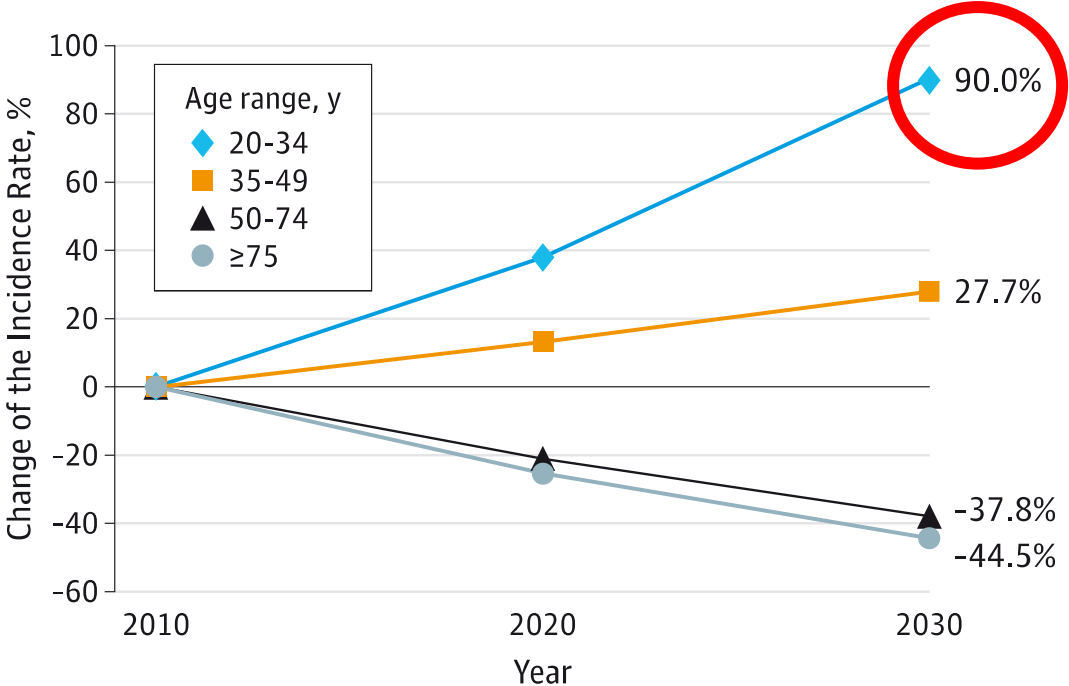


ANNUAL % CHANGE-BASED PREDICTED INCIDENCE, BY 2030

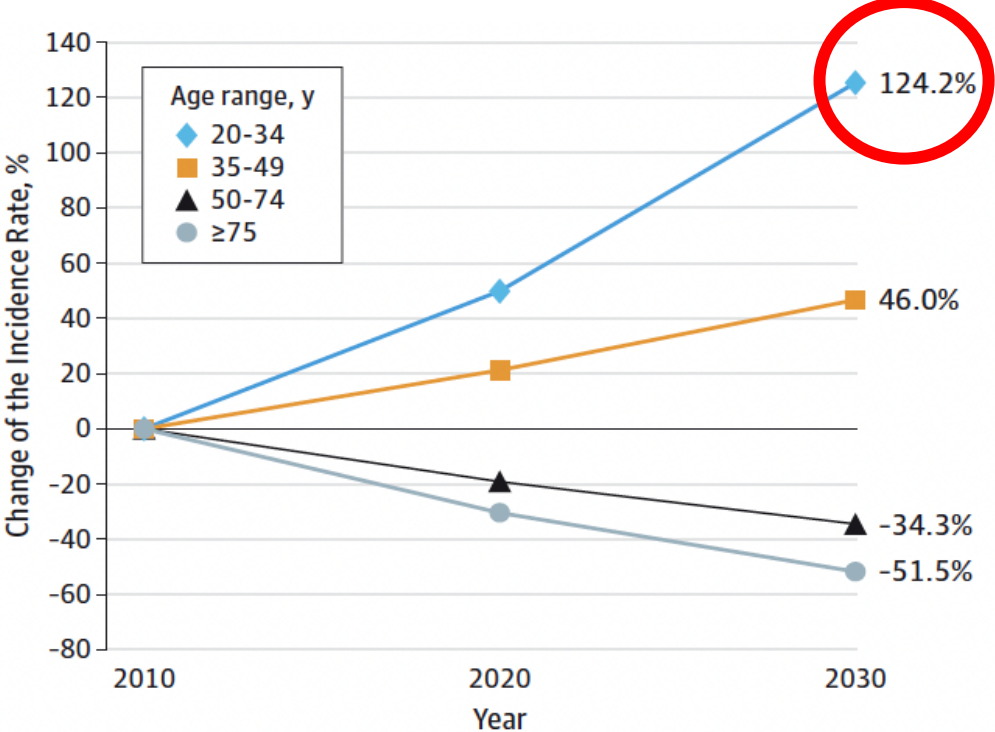
- US Rates by age compared with incidence rate in 2010



Colon Cancer



Rectosigmoid and Rectal Cancer

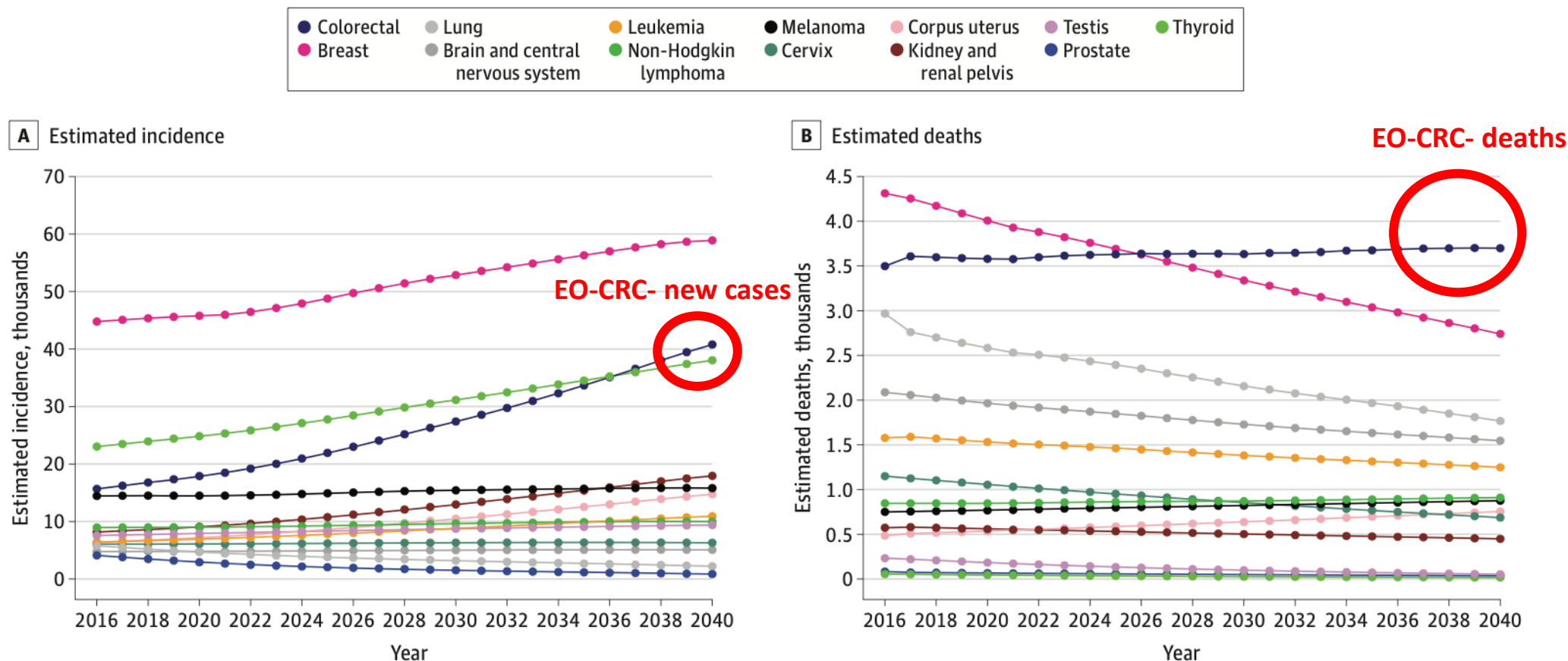


ESTIMATED CANCER INCIDENCE & DEATH, 20-49, BY 2040

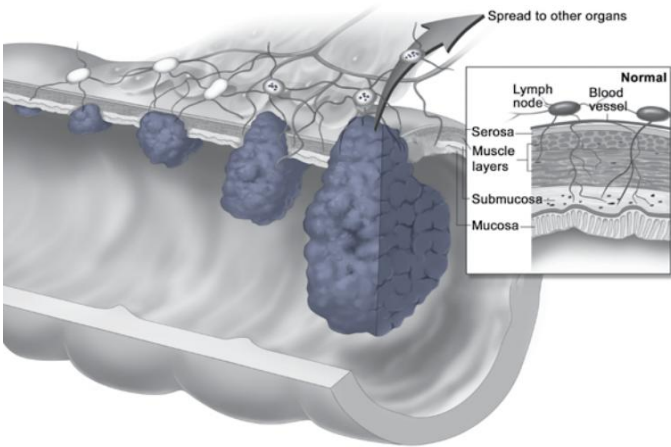
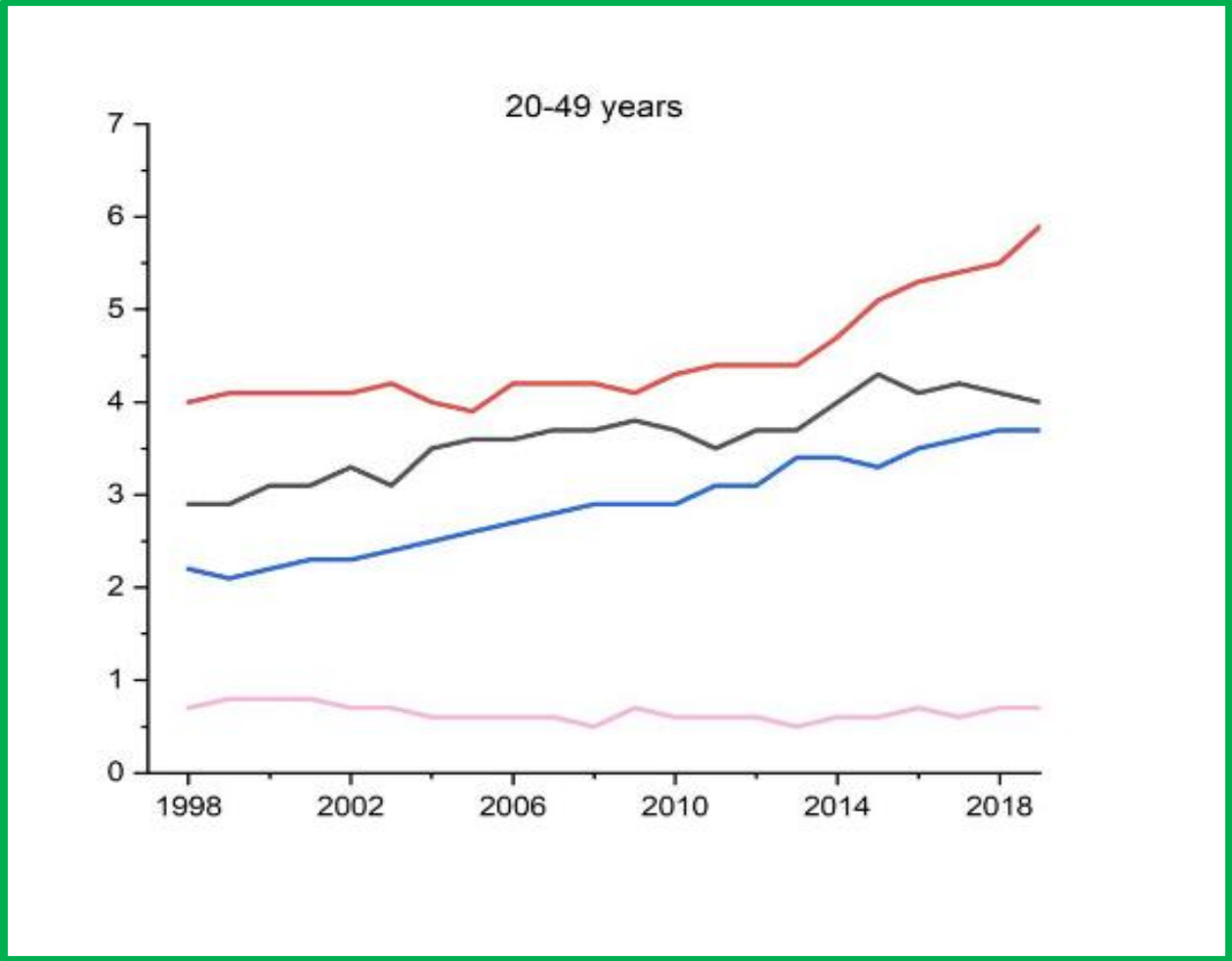
- Male and Female



Figure 3. Estimated Cancer Incidences and Death Among Both Male and Female Individuals Aged 20 to 49 Years for the Most Common Cancers and Causes of Cancer Death



US TRENDS IN INCIDENCE BY AGE AND STAGE, 1998-2019

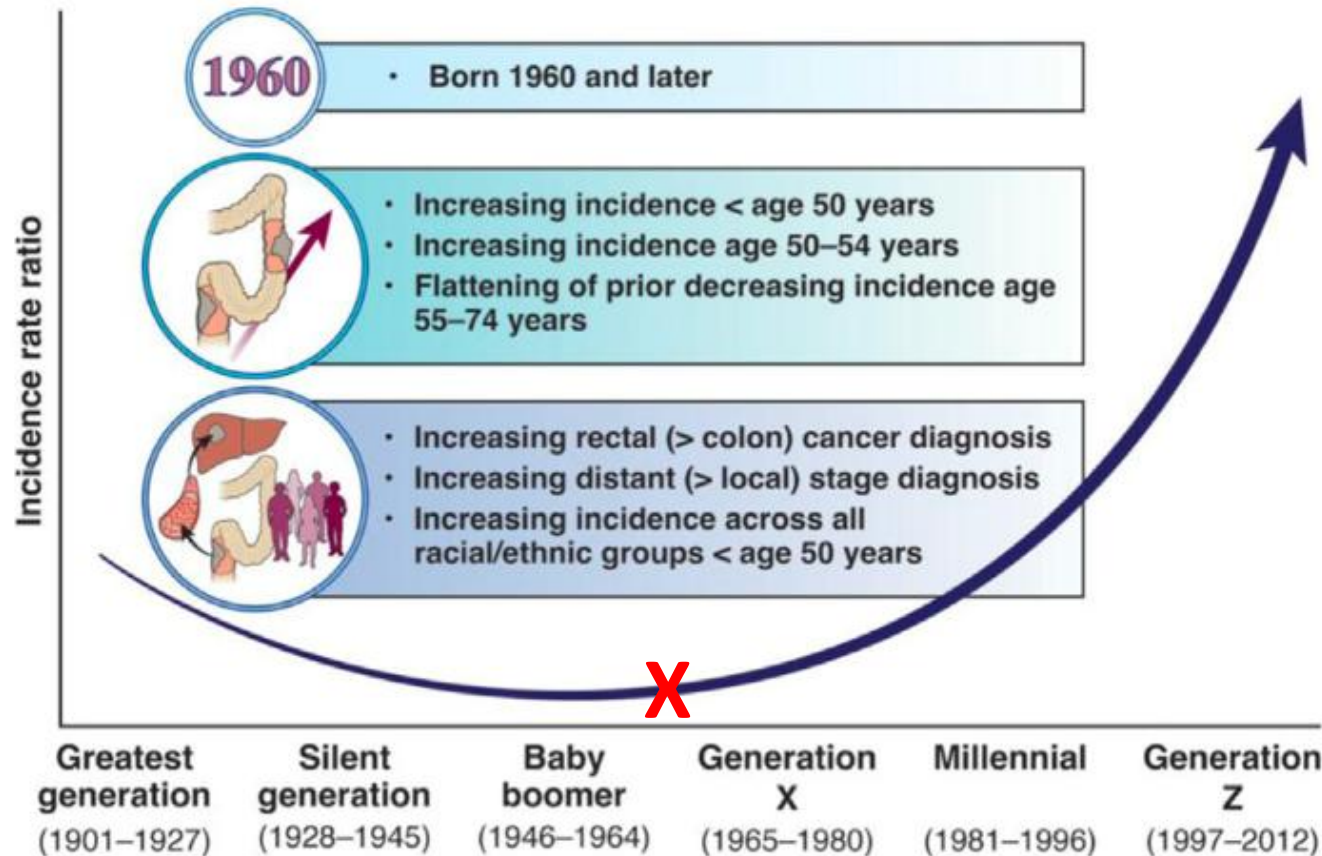


- Localized
- Regional
- Distant
- Unstaged

What is driving early-onset adult cancers?

BIRTH COHORT EFFECT IN THE US

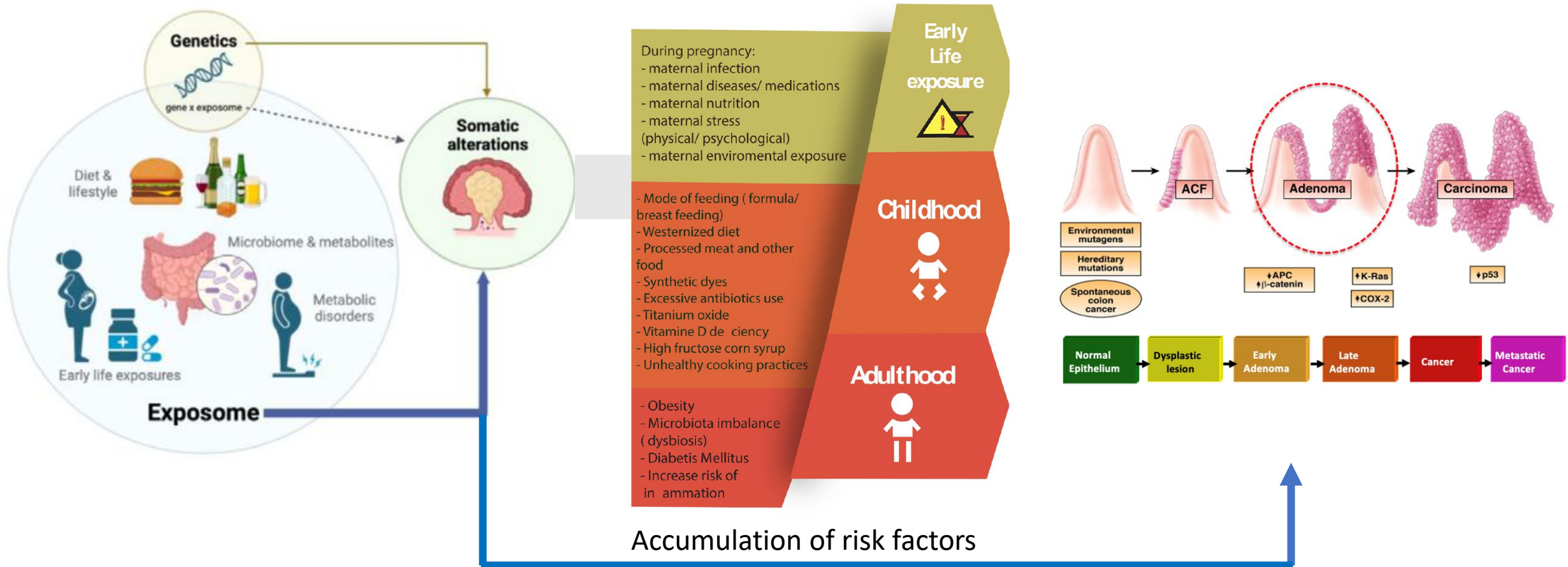
- A Generational Phenomenon



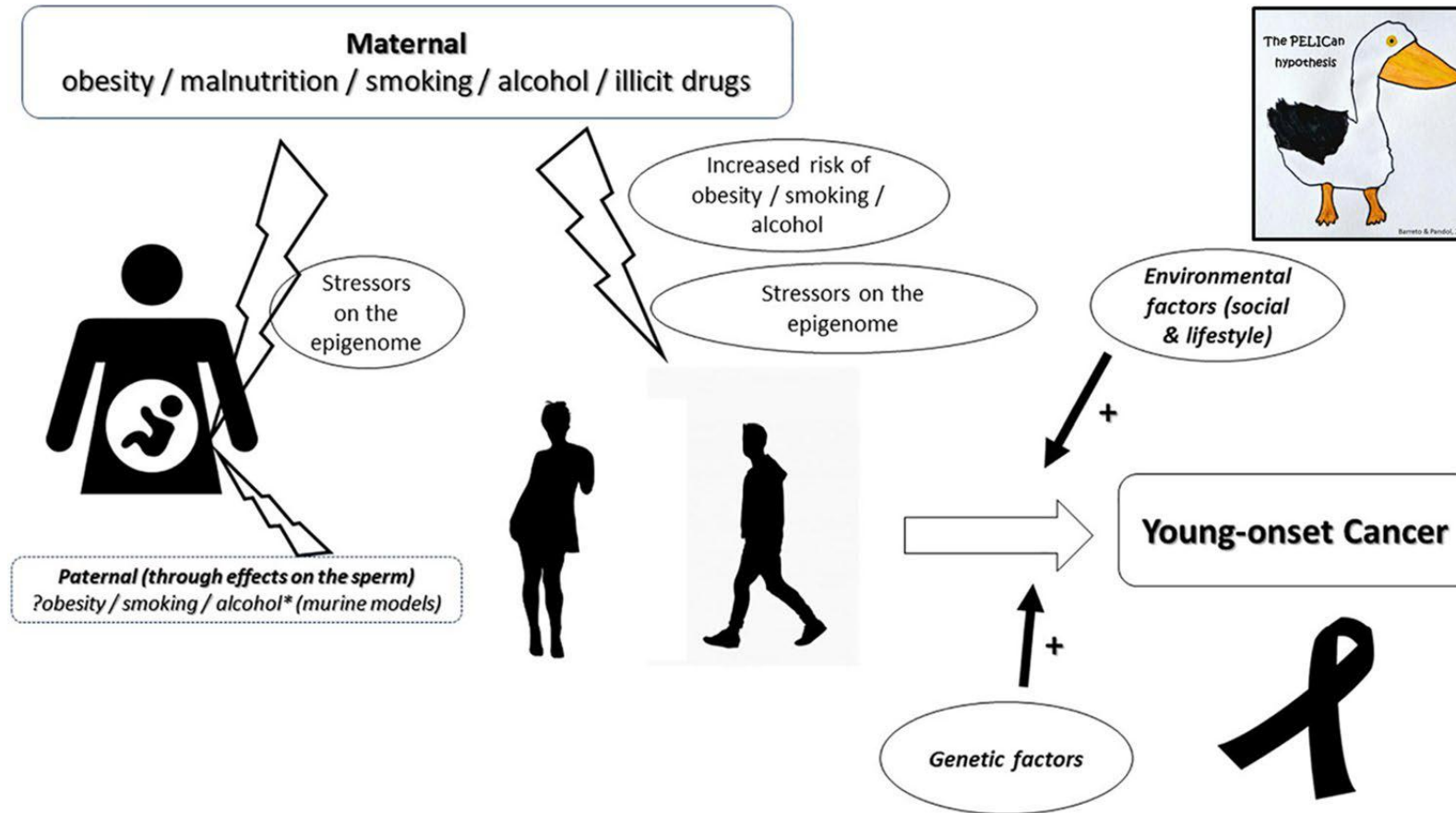
- How one's birth period influences health and behavior
- Born circa 1990 compared to 1950:
 - Double the risk of colon cancer
 - 4x the risk of rectal cancer
- Consider environmental/epigenetic changes since 1950?

IMPLICATES EXPOSURES ACROSS THE LIFE COURSE

- Greater rigor in epidemiologic studies needed



The PELICan hypothesis



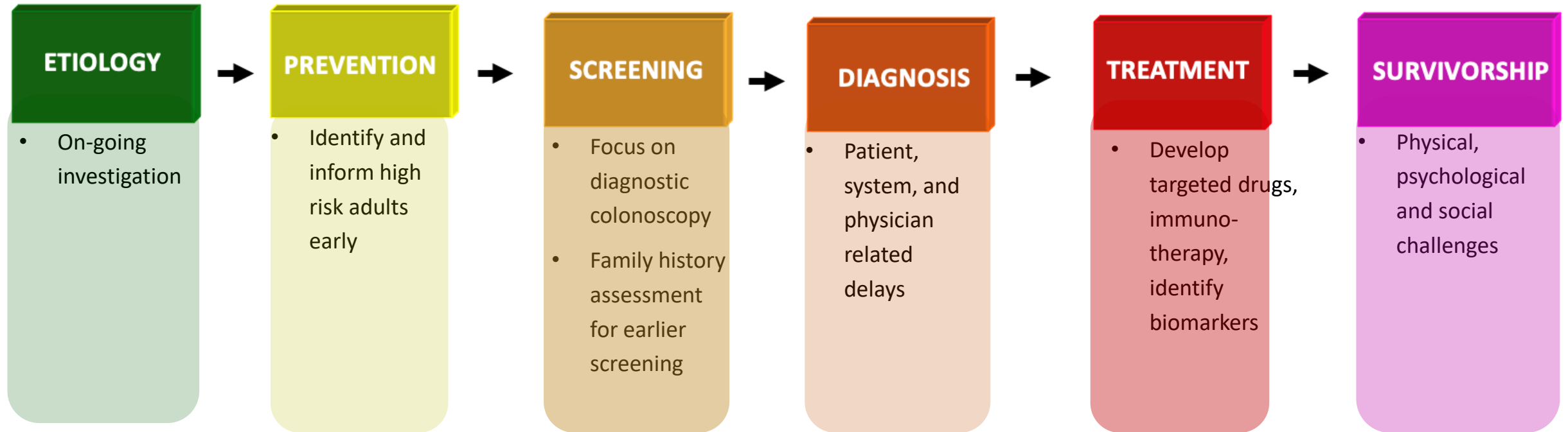
Prof. S. Pandol

Barreto SG. WJS. 2020
Barreto & Pandol. Front Oncol. 2021
Barreto SG. Indian J Surg 2022
*Logo designed by Ian Barreto

SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM IN THE US



- Spans the cancer continuum



Develop interdisciplinary collaborations.

Evidence-based Guidelines

USPSTF-----> Colon cancer screening recommend for adults ages 45 to 75 years who are at average risk

Colonoscopy every 10yrs

Stool DNA FIT every 3 years

gFOBT or FIT every year

Flex Sigmoidoscopy every 5 years

CT colonography every 5years

Flex Sig every 10yrs + FIT yearly



UNDERSTANDING PERCEPTIONS AMONG WOMEN

- Women under 50



1

OBGYN Waiting Room Survey (n=7,176)

2

 **CloudResearch**[®]

National AI Survey (n=2,000) - Pilot Test among women 35-54 (n=50)

- *unaware of screening age*
- *doctor has not recommended*
- *perceives average risk, yet family history*
- *perception of low risk based on lifestyle*

3

 **Northwell**
Health[®]

Artificial Intelligence Hub

Project Title: Enhancing Awareness of Colorectal Cancer Screening for Women in Westchester County

This project will leverage our established partnerships with the Westchester County Health Commissioner Dr Amler, Cancer Support Community of Greater NY & CT (CSCNYCT), Northwell OBGYN Service Line, Northwell Health Gastroenterology Service Line, and local healthcare providers to expand our reach.

Our team has already participated in two press conferences with the County Executive and Health Commissioner, reinforcing our leadership in public health initiatives.

This project will further strengthen women's health advocacy by tackling gaps in colorectal cancer education, prevention and early detection.

Project Timeline & Deliverables

This 12-month initiative will include:

- Phase 1 (Months 1-3): Needs assessment, stakeholder engagement, and development of women-focused educational materials (brochures, social media content).
- Phase 2 (Months 4-9): Implementation of community outreach initiatives, including five educational workshops and provider training sessions.
- Phase 3 (Months 10-12): Evaluation, data collection, and development of a sustainability plan.

EARLY-ONSET CANCER PROGRAM (EOCP):

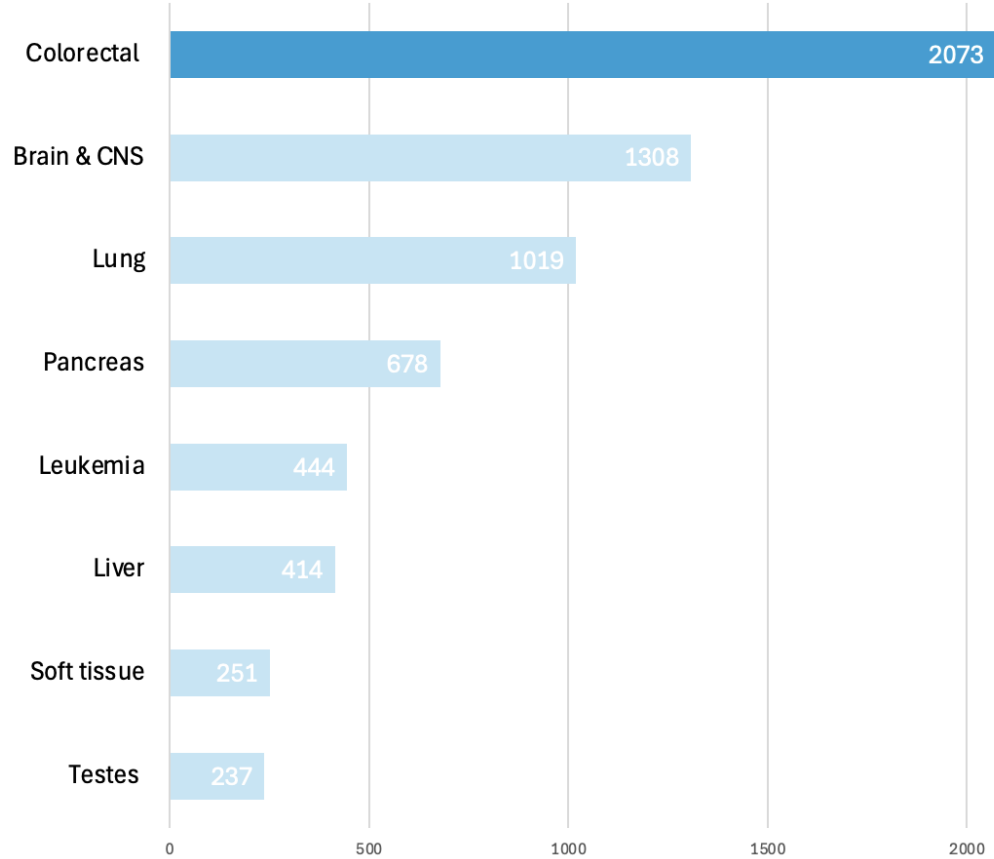
Navigated, multi-disciplinary referrals
state-of-the-art care across the cancer continuum

October 8, 2025

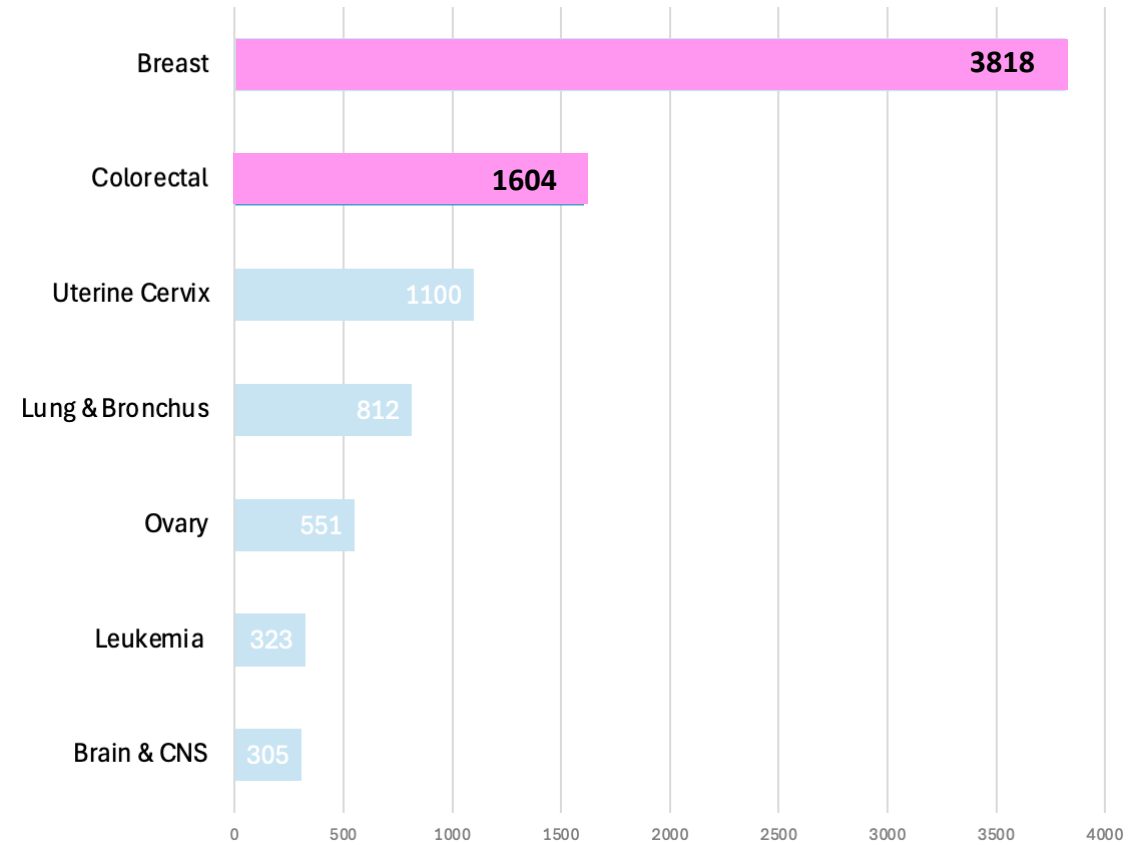
COLORECTAL & BREAST - LEADING CAUSES OF CANCER DEATH AMONG 18-49 YEAR OLDS



CRC LEADING among MALES, 20-49



Breast & CRC LEADING among FEMALES, 20-49



CANCER INCIDENCE SHIFTING YOUR



Patterns of early onset incidence 2010-2019,

GI system

- Highest numbers:**

- Colon/rectum
- Stomach
- Pancreas

- Fastest growing incidence:**

- Appendix
- Pancreas
- Intrahepatic bile duct

- Breast cancer**

- Highest number of overall incident early onset cases**

- Urinary system
- Female reproductive system
 - Cervical

System

Urinary system

Skin

Respiratory system

Other

Male reproductive system

Head and neck

Hematological malignant neoplasm

GI system

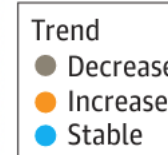
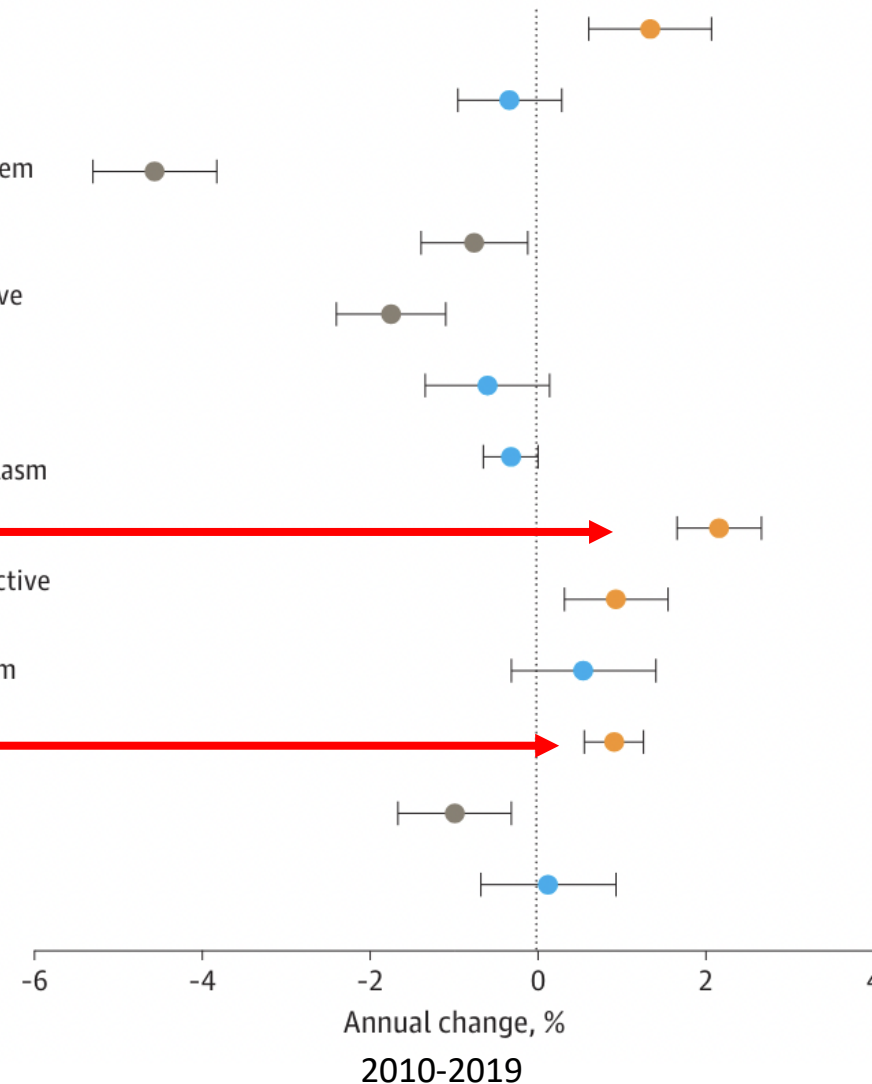
Female reproductive system

Endocrine system

Breast

Brain and other nervous system

Bones, joints, and soft tissues

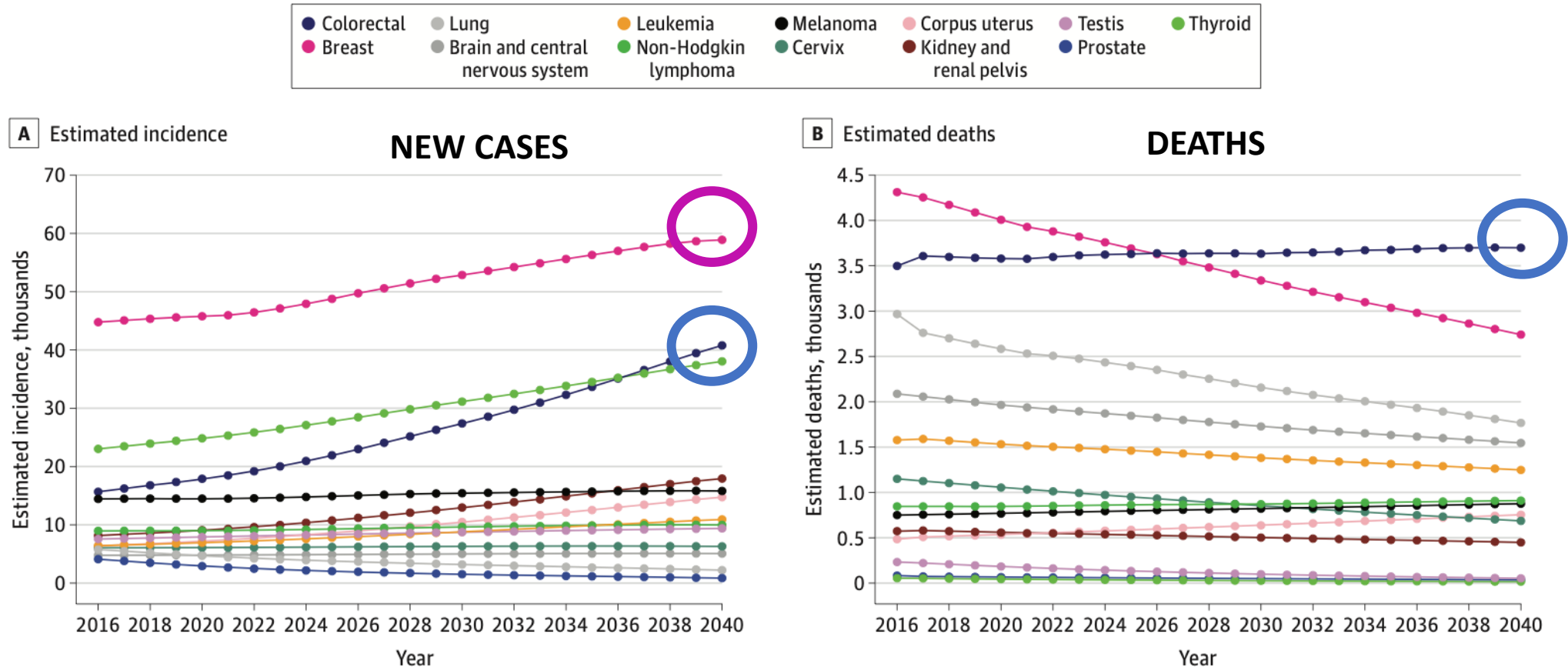


PROJECTIONS BY 2040

- New cases projected to increase



Figure 3. Estimated Cancer Incidences and Death Among Both Male and Female Individuals Aged 20 to 49 Years for the Most Common Cancers and Causes of Cancer Death



2. Vision, Mission & goal

EOCP MISSION AND GOALS



- **MISSION:** To become the regional and national leader in *patient-centered, and navigated care* for early onset cancer among patients 18 to 49 years of age.
- **GOALS: 1)** To be the primary, multi-disciplinary, navigated resource and “hub” for early-onset, young adult cancer patients (18-49) to ensure optimal care across the cancer continuum at Phelps and Northern Westchester Hospital; **2)** to create a model for expansion to other Northwell facilities/regions
- **OBJECTIVES:**
 - Develop a team of multi-disciplinary care providers
 - Create an efficient system for referrals and patient follow up
 - Develop patient care/clinical integration and service line collaboration
 - Collect and analyze program metrics for quality improvement

PATIENT IDENTIFICATION

- 4 Pathways



1.

Tumor Board

- Colorectal and Breast
- Identify patients <50 years of age

2.

Provider Referral

- Provider contacts EOCP
- Email, phone call to navigator

3.

EMR

- EMR filter, registries, schedule review

4.

Brochure

- Informational patient brochure with QR code for self referral – waiting rooms/exam rooms

EARLY-ONSET CANCER PROGRAM (EOCP)

Leading early-onset cancer care in Westchester



The Early-Onset Cancer Program in Westchester is dedicated to addressing the rising incidence of cancer among adults ages 18-50. Through a patient-centered, multidisciplinary approach, the program provides prevention, early detection, treatment, and survivorship services. Our mission is to advance education, research, and collaborative care to improve outcomes.

Mission & vision

To become the regional and national leader in patient-centered, navigated care for early-onset cancer among patients ages 18-50.

We promote prevention and excellence in care through:

- Education
- Research
- Clinical integration & collaboration

Our multidisciplinary team is committed to excellence across the cancer continuum — from screening and diagnosis to treatment and survivorship.

Join us in raising awareness

- EOCP Webinars, brochures, lapel pins available
- Feedback welcomed – please share your input

How to refer

Referrals accepted via Tumor Board, provider email/phone, EMR review, or brochure/QR code

Contact: Sarah Pollak, EOCP Navigator

Phone number: 914-366-1657

Email: spollak1@northwell.edu

Why it matters

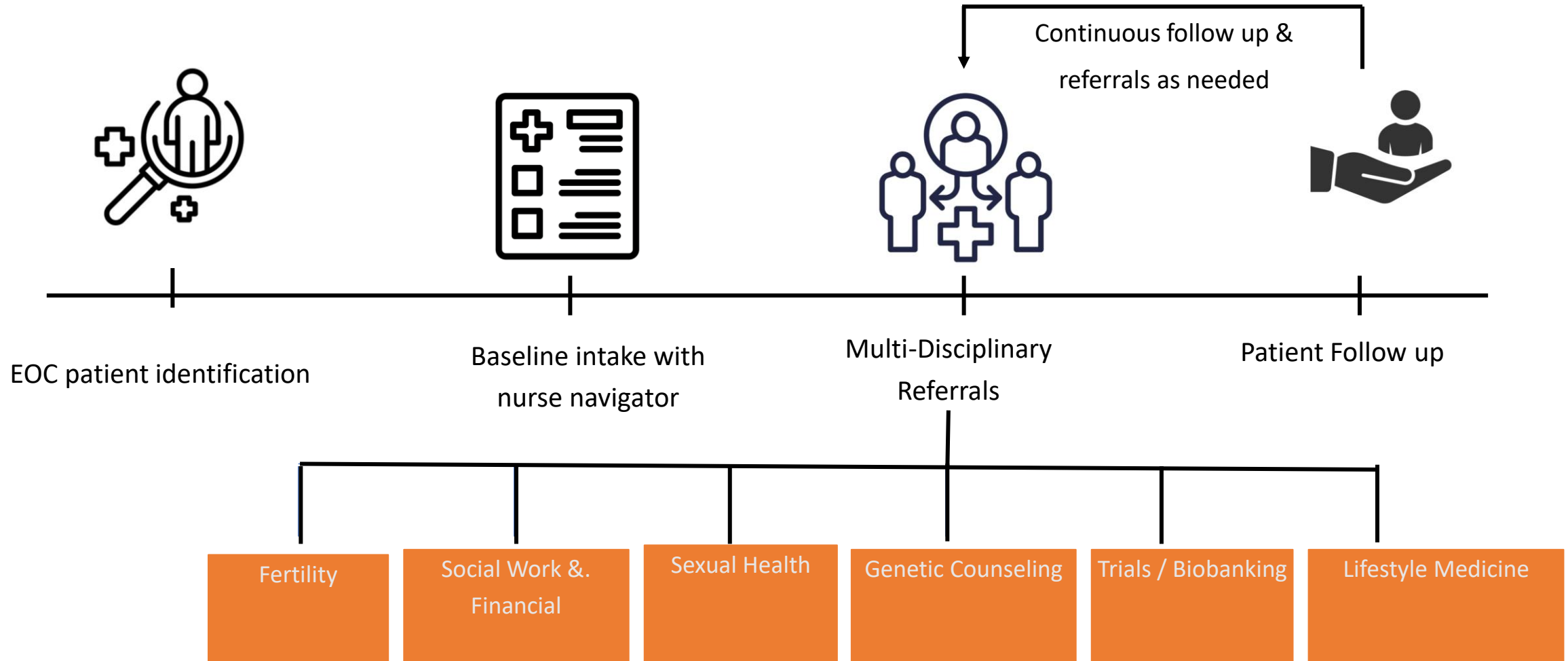
- Cancer diagnoses are shifting younger: rising incidence of colorectal, breast, GI, and reproductive cancers in patients under 50.
- Projections by 2040: early-onset cancers expected to increase significantly.
- Leading causes of cancer death in patients colorectal cancer (men) and breast cancer (women).

Program highlights

- Patient Identification – 4 Pathways: Tumor Boards (Colorectal, Breast; <50 yrs) Provide referrals (direct to EOCP navigator) EMR filter & registries Brochures & QR self-referral tool
- Multidisciplinary Teams: Breast, Prostate, Urinary, Female Reproductive cancers
- Integrated Services: Fertility & sexual health survivorship, navigation, mental health & financial counseling, family support



PATIENT INTAKE, REFERRAL & FOLLOW UP



Collateral to increase awareness



Provider lapel pin

EARLY-ONSET CANCER PROGRAM (EOCP)

Leading early-onset
cancer care in Westchester



The Early-Onset Cancer Program in Westchester is dedicated to addressing the rising incidence of cancer among adults ages 18-50. Through a patient-centered, multidisciplinary approach, the program provides prevention, early detection, treatment, and survivorship services. Our mission is to advance education, research, and collaborative care to improve outcomes.

Mission & vision

To become the regional and national leader in patient-centered, navigated care for early-onset cancer among patients ages 18-50.

We promote prevention and excellence in care through:

- Education
- Research
- Clinical integration & collaboration

Why it matters

- Cancer diagnoses are shifting younger: rising incidence of colorectal, breast, GI, and reproductive cancers in patients under 50.
- Projections by 2040: early-onset cancers expected to increase significantly.
- Leading causes of cancer death in patients colorectal cancer (men) and breast cancer (women).

Patient Brochure

2ND ANNUAL

EARLY ONSET COLORECTAL CANCER SYMPOSIUM

*Shaping the Future of Early
Onset Colorectal Cancer:
Awareness, Action, and Innovation*

Thursday, March 13, 2025

7:30am-5pm

5pm-6pm Reception to Honor our Patients

Location:

Phelps Hospital
701 North Broadway, Sleepy Hollow, NY
Auditorium

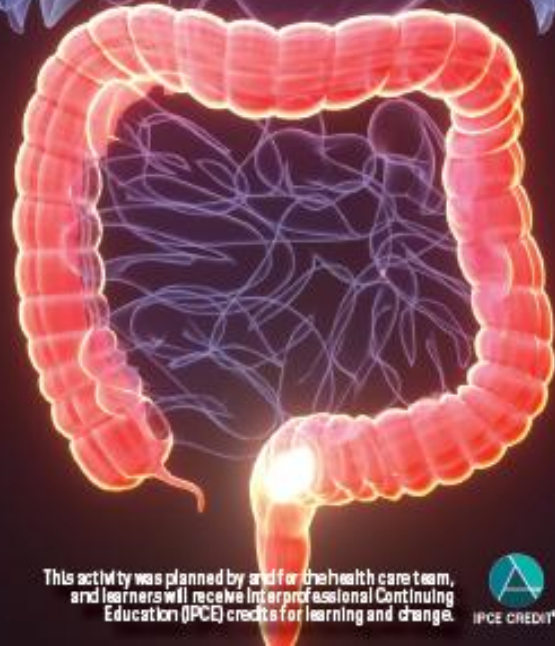
Course Directors:

Parul J. Shukla, MD
Regional Chief of Colon & Rectal Surgery
for Westchester, Northwell Health

Professor of Surgery
Donald and Barbara Zucker
School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell

Christine L. Sardo Molmenti, PhD, MPH
Associate Professor, Cancer Epidemiologist
Donald and Barbara Zucker
School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell
Northwell Department of Occupational Medicine,
Epidemiology, and Prevention

Live – in person event



This activity was planned by and for the health care team,
and learners will receive Interprofessional Continuing
Education (IPCE) credits for learning and change.



2nd Annual Early Onset Colorectal Cancer Symposium

- Presented by the Northwell Health Cancer Institute in collaboration with the Katz Institute for Women's Health, Phelps Hospital & Northern Westchester Hospital. Featuring leading experts who will discuss the rising increase of colorectal cancer in people under 50, epidemiologic factors, genetics, the microbiome and lifestyle, screening, advances in treatment, fertility and sexual health, and partnerships in our community.

Thank you

pshukla2@northwell.edu





A SURVIVOR'S TALE: A TRUE 13%

Rian Rodriguez, MPH

Director of Public Health, Putnam County

AIM: I'M HOPING WE CAN SPUR A CALL TO
ACTION BY ALL LHD'S:

TO CREATE A DEFINED PATHWAY TO ENSURE
YOUNG WOMEN CAN GET SCREENED FOR
COLORECTAL CA

CASE STUDY: 48Y/O HISPANIC MALE DIAGNOSED WITH STAGE 4 COLORECTAL CANCER

- Colonoscopy performed on 7/18 revealing a golf sized tumor
- Pathology reveals confirmation for CA
- CAT Scan determines that the cancer had metastasized to the liver
- Prognosis was looking bleak
- Treatment course called for multiple surgeries, radiation and chemotherapy both systemically and via a hepatic pump
- Colostomy required for a year while the surgical area healed
- Recovery was almost as arduous as the treatment
- It is not your pity that I seek, but the avoidance of a similar journey for others. Especially, young woman.
- Silver lining: it was through my cancer journey that I found a better version of myself. That was my pathway back to public health and the spark to serve my community as Public Health Director

HOW DO YOU ENVISION THIS PARTNERSHIP EXTENDING BEYOND YOUR REGION, AND WHAT STEPS ARE YOU TAKING TO EXPAND THIS COLLABORATIVE MODEL STATEWIDE?

- We intend to use the regional model (Westchester, Putnam, & Dutchess) to provide the proof of concept necessary to replicate similar activities throughout the state
- Partner with first line screening modality companies to provide the baseline screening (ExactScience/Cologuard, Quest/Fit kits)
- Collaborate with local service delivery providers to ensure diagnostic confirmation via colonoscopy (Nuvance/Northwell merger-provider footprint in all 3 counties)
- Payment: leverage programmatic reach to entice baseline screening vendors, work with CSP to ensure diagnostic follow-up for those with positive findings that are un/underinsured. Assist residents that need to navigate their health insurance to ensure diagnostic confirmation



Kenneth W. Jenkins, County Executive
Sherlita Amler, M.D., Commissioner
Department of Health

Cancer Screening Promotion & Accessibility

WESTCHESTER COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
SHERLITA AMLER, M.D.
COMMISSIONER

Screening & Early Detection Saves Lives

- ▶ Two-fold approach:
 - Raise awareness of the importance of **timely cancer screening**
 - Connect residents in need with **affordable screening resources**
- ▶ WCDH has teamed up with:
 - Hospitals
 - Community Partners
 - Health Systems

Early Onset Colorectal Cancer

2024 - WCDH and Northwell Health began discussions around the rise in EOCRC diagnoses.

COVID Consequences

- Many skipped routine screenings
- Provider shortages creating appt. backlogs
- EOCRC screening guidelines revised to decrease initial age 50 to 45

Conclusion: Concerted, multifaceted effort needed to:

- Spread the word that **45 is the new 50** for colorectal cancer screening
- Increase access to screening services



EOCRC Hospital Collaborative



- ▶ January 2025 - WCDH convenes **a new countywide hospital collaborative**
- ▶ Goal - **Make Westchester the Best Screened County** for CRC in NYS:
 - Resource sharing
 - Low cost/no cost screening opportunities
 - Unified messaging & promotion
- ▶ March 2025 - CE Jenkins hosts press event to introduce

New York Medical College Event



Dr. Parul Shukla
Chief of Colorectal Surgery
Northwell Health Westchester

- ▶ NYMC partnered with the Westchester CRC Collaborative to raise awareness about EOCRC among public health professionals.
- ▶ September 2025 - Dr. Shukla provides a presentation on the rise of EOCRC and the importance of timely screening to:
 - Hudson Valley PH Commissioners & Directors
 - NYMC School of Public Health Leadership

WCDH Clinic CRC Referral Program

- ▶ Two locations: White Plains and Yonkers:
 - Immunizations
 - STI testing and treatment
 - TB services
- ▶ Nurses implementing patient screening questions to identify anyone eligible for CRC screening
- ▶ Those with a medical home who meet the guidelines encouraged to follow up with their provider to arrange for screening
- ▶ Those who lack a medical home or are un/under insured are connected to providers that offer no or low cost CRC screening services



THE NO. 1 SYMPTOM OF COLORECTAL CANCER IS NO SYMPTOM AT ALL

Do you have a family history of colorectal cancer or advanced polyps? It's recommended that you have a colonoscopy at 40 years old or earlier, because you're more likely to develop colorectal cancer and advanced polyps compared to those without a family history. The good news is, five-year survival rates for colorectal cancer are about 90% if caught early, so getting your colonoscopy on time is key.

Facts about colorectal cancer:

- Over 55% of colorectal cancers are found in regional and distant stages, when 5-year survival can be as low as 15%.
- When found early, 5 year survival is about 90%.
- Colonoscopy is the gold standard for screening because it detects AND prevents colorectal cancer.
- Being physically active (30 minutes a day) reduces risk of colorectal cancer.
- Consuming whole grains and dietary fiber decreases risk of colorectal cancer.
- Consuming red and processed meat and just one alcoholic drink a day can increase your risk for colorectal cancer.

Do you know that colorectal cancer is the 3rd leading cause of cancer death among women?

The American Cancer Society (ACS) and the United States Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recently lowered the age guidelines to 45 for who should be screened.

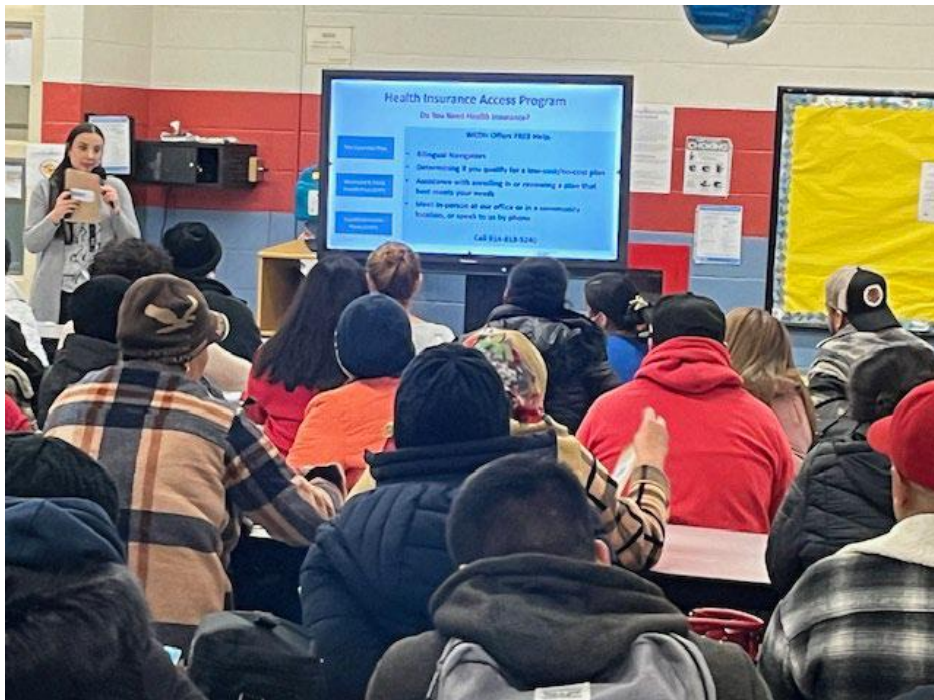
Early detection is often the biggest key to beating colorectal cancer and that begins with education and awareness.

Feeling hesitant? This short video may change your mind. Scan the QR code to watch.

Northwell Health
Katz Institute for Women's Health



Cancer Education Collaborative



- ▶ To introduce the importance of cancer prevention and early detection to residents, **WCDH is part of a continuing cancer education collaborative** with:
 - Cancer Support Community of Greater NY & CT at Gilda's Club
 - American Cancer Society
 - Cancer Support Team
- ▶ Bilingual presentations to community groups about:
 - Types of cancer screenings available
 - When to obtain them
 - Symptoms to watch for

Cancer Education Collaborative

We Eliminate Barriers to Care!

Local hospitals and health centers who are part of the Hudson Valley Cancer Services Program (CSP) offer registration for FREE cancer screenings to eligible participants on the spot.

CSP Services Include:

- Breast Exams and Mammograms
- Pelvic Exams and Pap Tests
- Colorectal Health Screenings
- Prostate Screening



The Importance of Cancer Screenings and Early Detection: An Evening of Self-Care for Women

Thursday, October 19, 2023

5:30 PM - 7:00 PM

Gilda's Club Westchester

80 Maple Avenue, White Plains, NY

Bilingual Education Session Covering:

- Cancer Prevention ▪ Cancer Screening Types
- Early Detection and its Barriers ▪ Community Resources

Referrals for FREE Cancer Screenings

for Uninsured or Underinsured Participants

Provided by White Plains Hospital Center for Cancer Care Clinical Navigator

Register in Advance

<https://gcw.gnosishosting.net/Events/Calendar?eviid=28739>

A light dinner will be served



Cancer Education Collaborative



**Desayuno Educativo
para la Salud**

1. Conozca los programas de salud gratuitos.
2. Entienda cuando es importante consultar a un médico.
3. Regístrese para las proyecciones gratuitas.

 **24 MARZO, 2025**
9:00 AM - PROGRAMA

 **DIRECCIÓN:**
Don Bosco Community Center
22 Don Bosco Place
Port Chester, NY 10573

Para Registrarse:
Comunicarse con Carmen Lopez de Linero
914-552-9541 o linero@donboscocenter.org

Presentado por:



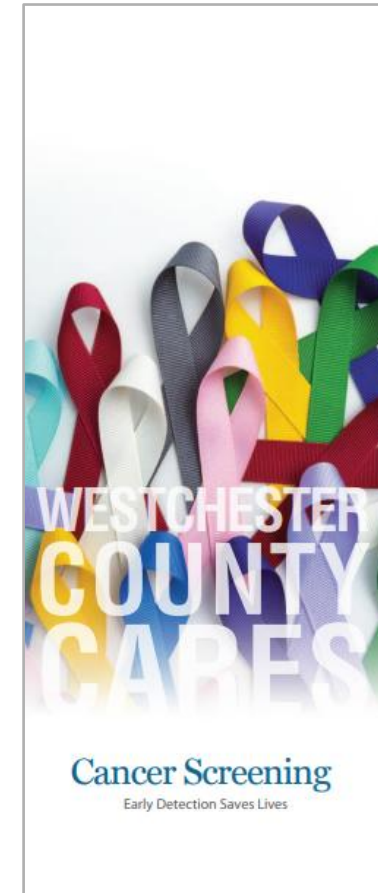
Recent Community Presentation Sites:

- ▶ VIVE School/Pathways to Success, Yonkers
- ▶ Enrico Fermi School, Yonkers
- ▶ Pearls Hawthorne School, Yonkers
- ▶ Carver Center, Port Chester
- ▶ Neighbor's Link, Mt. Kisco
- ▶ City School District of New Rochelle
- ▶ Don Bosco Community Center, Port Chester

Westchester County Cares

WCDH Cancer Screening Brochure

- Information on the importance of routine cancer screenings and early detection available in English and Spanish
- Link to current guidelines on when to be screened for some of the most common cancers
- Links to WCDH cancer screening services webpage for cancer resources throughout Westchester
- Promotes HPV vaccine offered in WCDH clinics



Westchester County Cares



- ▶ Additional topics available in the series
- ▶ [Westchester County Cares](#) website page to download electronic versions
- ▶ Limited print quantities are also available, email HealthPromotion@westchestercountyny.gov

Westchester County Cares



Visit us at: www.westchestergov.com/health



Like us at: facebook.com/wchealthdept



Follow us at: twitter.com/wchealthdept