

'Their prognosis has improved so much': Majority of women diagnosed with early-stage breast cancer survive long-term, study shows

Most women diagnosed with early breast cancer will become long-term survivors, according to new research that finds a substantial reduction in the risk of death since the 1990s.

This news should reassure both patients and their doctors, researchers report June 13 in the [BMJ](#).

"Our study is good news for the great majority of women diagnosed with early breast cancer today because their prognosis has improved so much," said the authors, who included [Dr. Carolyn Taylor](#), a professor of oncology at the University of Oxford in England.

"Most of them can expect to become long-term cancer survivors," they added in a journal news release.

While in the 1990s, the average risk of dying from breast cancer within five years of diagnosis was 14%, it's now 5%. More than 60% of women diagnosed during 2010 to 2015 had a five-year risk of 3% or less.

In addition to offering reassurance, the findings can also help identify those who still have substantial risk, according to the study.

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It varied by patient age, whether the cancer was detected by screening, whether it had certain receptors, and according to cancer size, grade and the number of lymph nodes involved, the study noted.

While the risk was less than 3% for about 63% of women, it was more than 20% for nearly 5% of women.

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