

Joint Research with IARC

Identifying associations between lifestyle risk factors and the prognosis of cancer survivors

Aiming to accumulate evidence to improve quality of life of cancer survivors

July 21, 2022

National Cancer Center Japan

Highlights

- The National Cancer Center Japan (NCC) and the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) launched a new joint research that will comprehensively capture and track patients from before and after cancer diagnosis on a long-term basis, utilizing the infrastructure and statistics of existing cohorts in Japan and Europe.
- This research will collect evidence on the impact of lifestyle risk factors prior to cancer on the diagnosis, prognosis, treatment, survival and quality of life of cancer patients, which has not yet been well studied.
- In Japan where it is currently difficult to link necessary data, we aim to build a research platform that combines data from cohort studies and cancer registries.
- In conducting this research, a Population-Based Long-Term Surveillance section/team was established within NCC and IARC, jointly operated by the two institutions.

Summary

The National Cancer Center (President: Hitoshi NAKAGAMA, Chuo-ku Tokyo) and the International Agency for Research on Cancer (Elisabete WEIDERPASS, Lyon France), the specialized cancer agency of the World Health Organization (WHO) launched a joint research aiming to improve quality of life of cancer survivors by identifying associations of lifestyle risk factors and the prognosis of cancer survivors.

This research will utilize the Japanese and European cohorts of NCC and IARC. Target subjects are cancer survivors from the Japan Public Health Center-based Prospective Study (JPHC, 140 thousand participants), the Japan Public Health Center-based Prospective Study for the Next Generation (JPHC-NEXT, 110 thousand participants) and the European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition (EPIC, 520 thousand participants). Similarities including a growing number of cancer survivors and a high average life expectancy, the collaboration between Japan and Europe will be promising as we can accumulate evidence on a large scale while considering ethnic differences. This joint research will create the foundation to build evidence in developing guidelines that can be used to improve quality of life of

cancer survivors around the world. Furthermore, with a vision of providing this model to other countries and applying to diseases other than cancer, we will work in establishing a long-term follow-up platform utilizing public statistics such as cancer registry data.

To promote this long-term research, a jointly coordinated Population-Based Long-Term Surveillance section/team has been newly established within NCC and IARC, composed of staff holding dual positions in either institution, embodying a strong collaborative framework.

Population-Based Long-Term Surveillance (LTS) section/team

In conducting this research, a Population-Based Long-Term Surveillance section/team was established within NCC and IARC which is jointly operated by the two institutions. In terms of organizational structure, for NCC it is positioned as a section under the Division of International Health Policy Research, Institute for Cancer Control (Director: Hitoshi NAKAGAMA) and for IARC it is referred to as a team under the Nutrition and Metabolism Branch.


Centered around this joint research, the LTS section/team will conduct a long-term research to follow-up the public before and after cancer diagnosis by combining statistics and data from large-scale cohort studies, cancer registries, medical information from medical institutions and others. This will not only lead to finding out which lifestyle factors are associated with cancer risks, but also clarify the association with circumstances of cancer onset, effectiveness of treatment and the quality of life after cancer diagnosis. In the future, we aim to apply the methods established through this joint research to diseases other than cancer and provide data linkage to the development of anticancer drugs, as well as transferring this knowledge to other countries, such as Asia so that it can be widely used to improve health in Japan and the wider Asian region.

NCC: <https://www.ncc.go.jp/jp/icc/int-health-policy/lts/index.html>

IARC: <https://www.iarc.who.int/teams-nme-lts/>

Dr. Norie SAWADA

LTS section head – Division of International Health Policy Research,
Institute for Cancer Control, NCC

1999	M.D. from the Sapporo Medical University	
2005	Ph.D in Medicine from the Hokkaido University	
2005	Research Resident – Epidemiology and Prevention Division, Research Center for Cancer Prevention and Screening, National Cancer Center Japan	
2006	Staff Scientist – Epidemiology and Prevention Division, Research Center for Cancer Prevention and Screening, National Cancer Center Japan	

- 2012 Section Head – Division of Epidemiology, Center for Public Health Sciences, National Cancer Center Japan
- 2021 – Section Head – Division of Cohort Research, Institute for Cancer Control, National Cancer Center Japan (also appointed to the Division of International Health Policy Research, since April)

Dr. Marc GUNTER

Branch Head – Nutrition and Metabolism Branch, IARC

- 1998 B.A. (Hons) in Biochemistry from the University of Oxford
- 2003 Ph.D in Molecular Epidemiology from the University of Cambridge
- 2003 Post-doctoral fellowship, Division of Cancer Epidemiology and Genetics, National Cancer Institute, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda
- 2005 Health Instructor, Department of Epidemiology and Population Health, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, New York
- 2007 Assistant Professor, Department of Epidemiology and Population Health, Albert Einstein College of Medicine, New York
- 2011 Associate Professor (Reader), Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, School of Public Health, Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine, London
- 2016 – Head of Nutrition and Metabolism Branch, International Agency for Research into Cancer, Lyon, France.
- 2020 – Honorary Professor, Integrative Epidemiology Unit, University of Bristol, Bristol, U.K



Research Funds

This research is funded by the National Cancer Center Japan and the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science.

Enquiries

- On Research

Division of International Health Policy Research,
Institute for Cancer Control, NCC

Dr. Tomohiro MATSUDA, Dr. Norie SAWADA

E-mail: tomatsud@ncc.go.jp, nsawada@ncc.go.jp

- Office of Public Relations

Strategic Planning Bureau, NCC

TEL: +81-3-3542-2511

E-mail: ncc-admin@ncc.go.jp