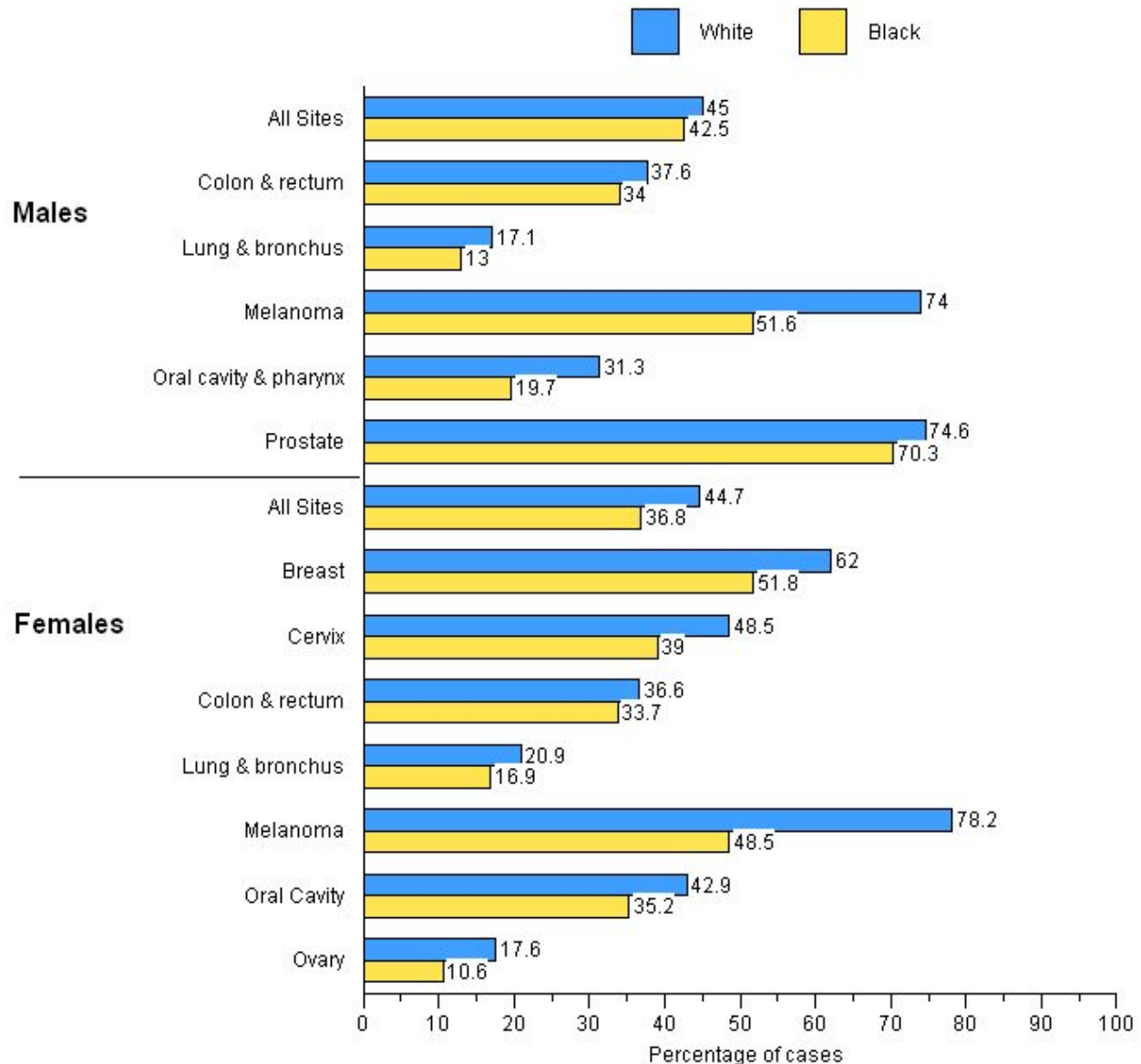


Distribution of Cancer by Stage in Virginia

- Doctors describe cancers in terms of *stage* at the point of diagnosis. Doctors consider the size and location of the tumor and whether or not it has *metastasized* (spread) from its original location to other parts of the body when staging the tumor. When the tumor has spread, it is invasive. The cancer stages are *in situ*, *local*, *regional*, *distant*, and *unknown*.
- Cancers diagnosed as *in situ* or *local* have not spread and have a better treatment prognosis than cancers diagnosed *regional* or *distant*. Based on cases diagnosed between 2001 and 2005 in Virginia, 12% of cancers were diagnosed *in situ*, 39% were diagnosed *local*, 19% regional, 18% distant, and 12% were not staged.
- Blacks are less likely to have their cancer diagnosed at an early (local) stage. This is true for cancer overall and for several types of cancer (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Percentage of Cancers Diagnosed Local Stage, By Site, by Sex & Race, Virginia, 2001-2005

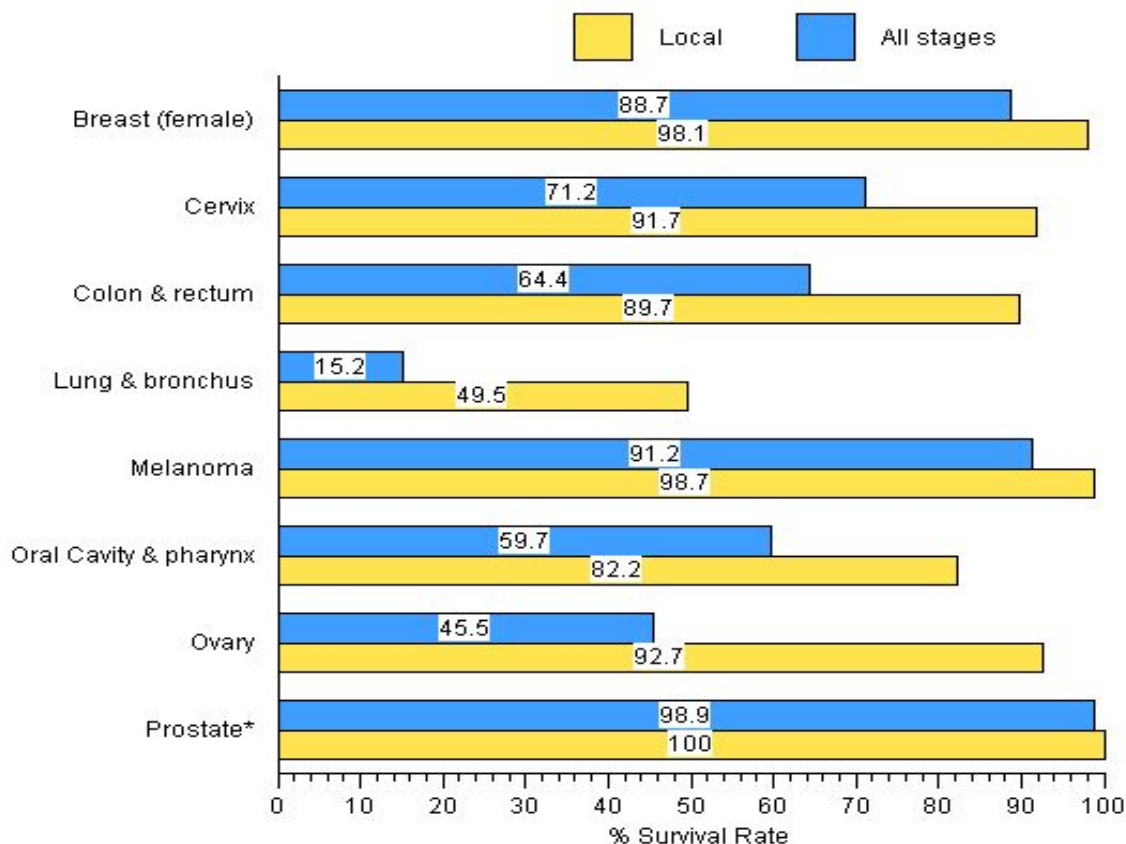


Source: Virginia Cancer Registry.

Cancer Survival

The *five-year relative survival rate* refers to the chance of being alive five years after being diagnosed with cancer. Rates vary by type of cancer and stage at diagnosis. Relative survival compares survival rates of people diagnosed with cancer to people of the same age, sex, and race who are not diagnosed with cancer. The survival rate for all cancers diagnosed between 1996 and 2004 was 65%, ranging from 5% (for pancreatic cancer) to 99% (for prostate cancer). The survival rate for cancers that are preventable, or detected earlier through screening—which account for half of all new cases diagnosed—is 85%. Figure 2 shows national five-year relative survival rates.

Figure 2. Five-Year Relative Survival Rates, U.S., 1996-2004



Source: Ries LAG, Melbert D, Krapcho M, et al. (eds.), *SEER Cancer Statistics Review, 1975-2005*, National Cancer Institute, Bethesda, MD. Rates are adjusted for normal life expectancy and are based on cases diagnosed in the SEER 17 areas from 1996-2004.

* The rate for local stage represents local and regional stages combined for prostate cancer.

- For information on cancer incidence and cancer staging in Virginia, go to the Virginia Cancer Registry website (<http://www.vahealth.org/cdpc/cancer/>).
- For information on cancer incidence and staging in the U.S. and other states, go to the National Cancer Institute (NCI) Surveillance, Epidemiology and End Results (SEER) website (<http://seer.cancer.gov/>).

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