

The impact of COVID-19 on new mesothelioma diagnoses in Italy

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Mangone L, Mancuso P, Bisceglia I, Giorgi Rossi P, Chellini E, Negro C, Benfatto L, Migliore E, Casotto V, Mensi C, Romanelli A, Tumino R, Grappasonni I, Cavone D, Mazzoleni G, Tallarigo F, Marinaccio A, ReNaM Working Group

OBJECTIVES

The aim of this work was to evaluate the impact of the restrictions put in place to control the COVID-19 pandemic on new diagnoses of malignant mesothelioma (MM) in Italy.

METHODS

Twelve of the 21 Italian malignant mesothelioma CORs (regional operating centres) participated. The study included all cases of MM with microscopic confirmation; cases without microscopic confirmation and death certificate only (DCO) were excluded. For each case, information on sex, date of birth, tumor site, morphology, and date of diagnosis was retrieved. We compared the number of incident cases in 2020 with 2019, looking at the overall picture and for four periods: pre-pandemic (January-February), first wave (March-May), low incidence (June-September), and second wave (October-December).

RESULTS

A total of 604 cases were registered: 307 in 2019 and 297 in 2020. In the 2020 pre-pandemic period, the incidence was higher than in the same months in 2019 (+45%); there was no significant change during the first wave (+1%) or in the low-incidence period (-3%), while a decrease was observed during the second wave (-32%). However, the data were not homogeneous across the country: the increase in the pre-pandemic period concerned mostly the regions of northern (+61.5%) and central Italy (+43.5%); during the first wave, MM diagnoses increased in the northern (+38.5%) and central (+11.4%) regions but decreased in the southern regions (-52.9%). All these differences are compatible with random fluctuations.

CONCLUSIONS

The COVID-19 pandemic had little or no impact on new MM diagnoses, and variations were not homogeneous throughout the country.

FULL TEXT PER GLI UTENTI REGISTRATI ALLA RIVISTA

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8888152/>