

ANTIMICROBIAL RESISTANCE

**Implications for
individuals with cancer**



**CANCER
FONDEN**

The availability of effective antibiotics is important for individuals newly diagnosed with cancer.

The Swedish Cancer Society is committed to beat cancer faster through financing cancer research in Sweden. Our objectives for 2030 are:

- To reduce preventable cancer cases by 30 %
- That a third of all cancers are diagnosed at an earlier stage
- That 80% survive a cancer diagnosis
- Enhanced quality of life for all individuals living with or beyond cancer

To reach these goals, our work is based on five pillars: we finance research, fundraise, inform and support, raise awareness, and drive advocacy.

For many years, The Swedish Cancer Society, has worked on national and international level to highlight the risks and implications that anti-microbial resistance (AMR) poses to cancer care.

Antimicrobial Resistance – A Growing Global Threat

Antimicrobial resistance (AMR) is an escalating and critical global public health threat, including Sweden. The emergence of antibiotic-resistant bacteria, coupled with the stagnation in the development of new antibiotics, jeopardizes our capacity to effectively treat infections, both now and in the future. Modern medical practices, including cancer treatment, organ transplants, major surgeries, and neonatal care, depend heavily on functioning antibiotics to manage infection risks. Without effective antibiotics, the success of these medical interventions is critically compromised.

Cancer patients and their reliance on antibiotics

After surgery or chemotherapy, patients with cancer face an elevated risk of infections. In collaboration with Strama (the Swedish strategic programme against antibiotic resistance), The Swedish Cancer Society has conducted a study to assess the extent to which individuals newly diagnosed with cancer have collected antibiotic prescriptions.

The findings clearly demonstrates that individuals diagnosed with a malignant tumor are collecting considerably more antibiotic prescriptions during the year of diagnosis and the subsequent year, in comparison to the general population. Consequently, antimicrobial resistance (AMR) presents a serious and growing threat to cancer patients, further complicating their treatment and outcomes.

Antibiotic prescription rates among individuals newly diagnosed with cancer vs. the general population

The study tracked **68,810** individuals diagnosed with cancer in 2021.

Of these, **41.9%** collected at least one antibiotic prescription during that year, compared to just **13.4%** of the general population.

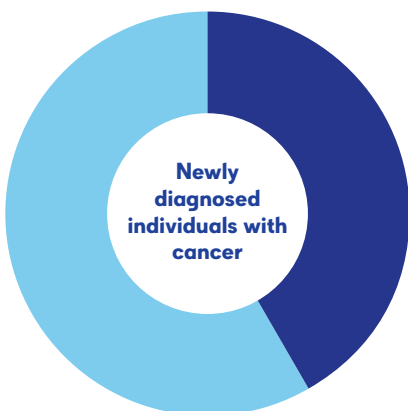
In 2022, **29.5%** of the individuals in the study population collected at least one antibiotic prescription, compared to **14.6%** of the general population.

Cumulatively, **54,8%** of individuals newly diagnosed with cancer collected an antibiotic prescription during 2021 and/or 2022. Additionally, **16,7%** of these patients collected at least one antibiotic prescription in both years.

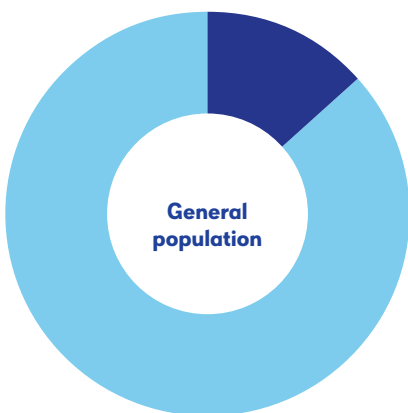
This significantly higher proportion compared to the general population underscores the vital role that effective antibiotics play in the treatment of cancer patients.

It is important to note that antibiotics administered during hospital stays or outpatient visits were not included in the scope of this study.

Antibiotic prescriptions in 2021:



41,9% collected at least one antibiotic prescription.



13,4% collected at least one antibiotic prescription.

This informational brochure is part of a collaborative initiative between **The Swedish Cancer Society** and **Strama**. The objective is to better understand the reliance on effective antibiotics among individuals newly diagnosed with cancer.

The statistical data were sourced from the Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare's National Cancer Register, Medicines Register, and the agency's open pharmaceutical statistics database.

For further inquiries, please do not hesitate to contact The Swedish Cancer Society.



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