Pancreatic Cancer: the patient's perspective & why early diagnosis is so important

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My route to diagnosis

Not associated with Told to alter (already Diagnosed with new-June 2006 healthy) diet & weight gain, no onset type II diabetes family history monitor Mid-upper back pain Told to take Diagnosed with End June/July radiating to front muscle strain ibuprofen 2007 Pain on eating – Diagnosed with IBS & Prescribed Buscopan stopped eating + Dyspepsia & Gaviscon change in bowel habit End July

Mid Aug

Asked GP if fit to travel (family holiday)



Told 'yes'



Spent week ill in hotel room









My route to diagnosis cont...

3rd week in Aug

Severe pain – home visit – out of hours GP



Suggested pancreatitis & told to go back to GP



Given morphine injection for pain

Next day

GP: discussed my pain on 'phone to surgical A&E team



Decided pain not bad enough to be admitted to hospital



GP prescribed Co-Codamol

Bank Holiday Monday

Took myself to A&E – they suspect gallstones



Told needed US – no-one available



Sent home with Tramadol

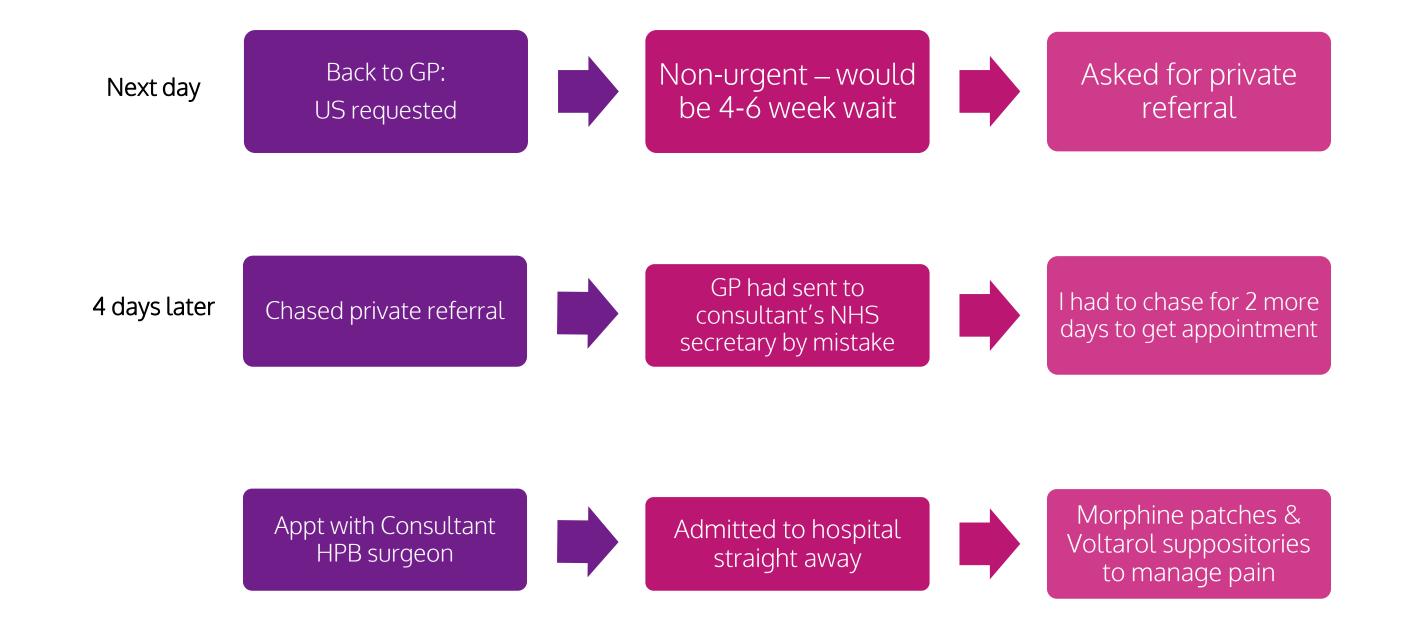








My route to diagnosis cont...











Diagnosed with PDAC 30th August 2007



Before diagnosis: fit & 'healthy' non-smoker, not overweight, no family history and rare attendee of the GP practice



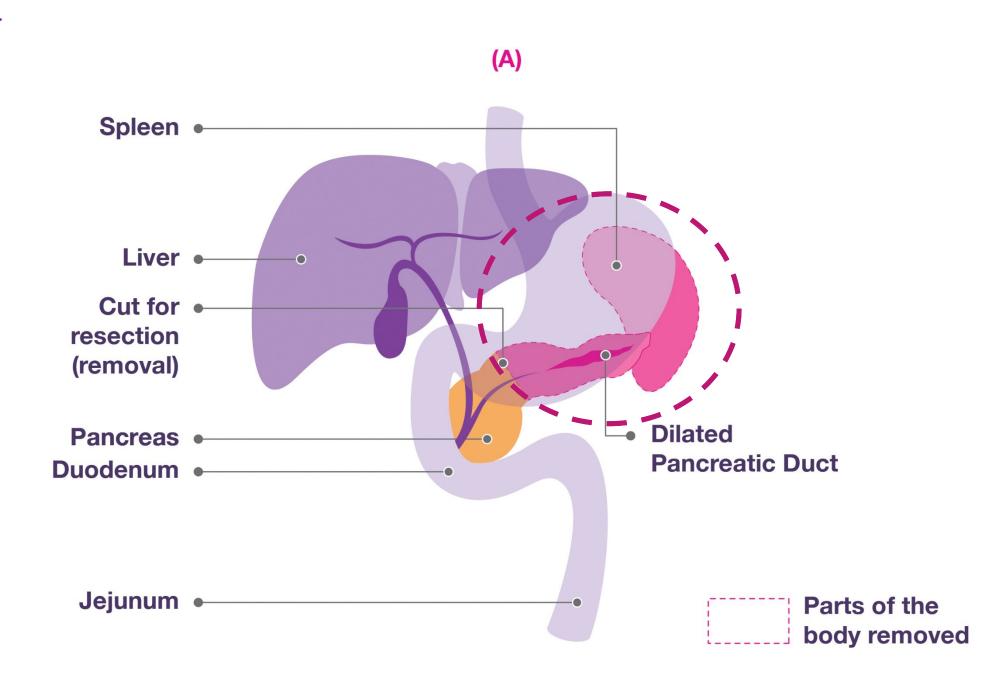






My personal situation unusual

- Distal pancreatectomy & splenectomy performed on 8th September 2007.
- ☐ Successful but 'close to margins'
- ☐ Histology revealed Stage 2b adenocarcinoma (1 lymph node affected
- ☐ Followed with 6 cycles Gemcitabine + Cisplatin
- ☐ Then 5.5 weeks of chemoradiotherapy (sensitiser: 5FU)











After effects of cancer and treatment

- Type 3c Diabetes
 - Insulin dependent, difficult to control
- Bile malabsorption
 - Cholestagel required with meals
- Peripheral neuropathy
- Early-onset menopause



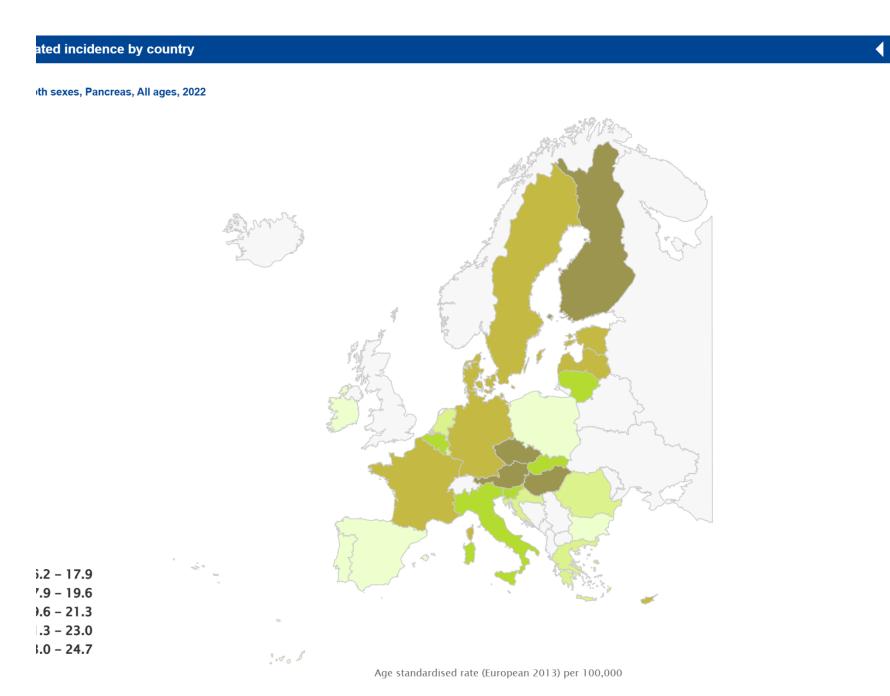








Pancreatic Cancer in the EU



ECIS - European Cancer Information System





- As a result, in Europe, almost 29% of all deaths are due to this cancer.
- Incidence and mortality are not equally distributed across member states.

UNITED EUROPEAN

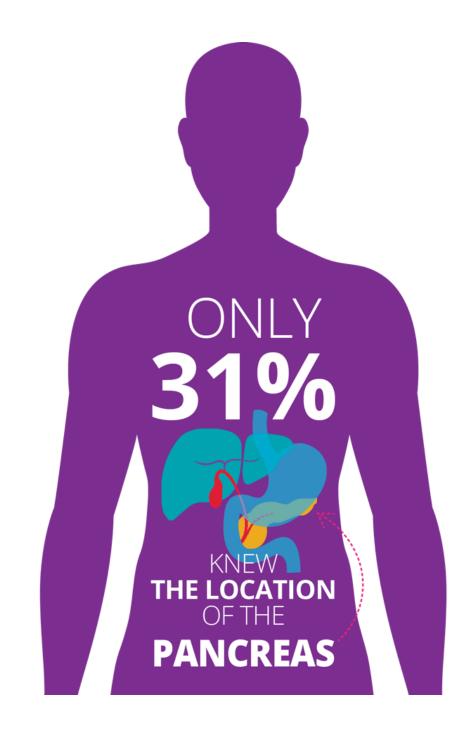






Pancreatic Cancer in the UK

- 10,500 newly diagnosed every year in the UK
- 9,500 patients die each year
- The 5-year survival rate is 8%
- PC is the 5th leading cause of cancer death.
- Only 10% are diagnosed in time for potentially curative surgery
- If patients diagnosed in time for surgery + adjuvant chemotherapy, the 5-year survival rate is >30%
- Only 1% will survive beyond 10 years
- Nearly half are diagnosed as an emergency presentation



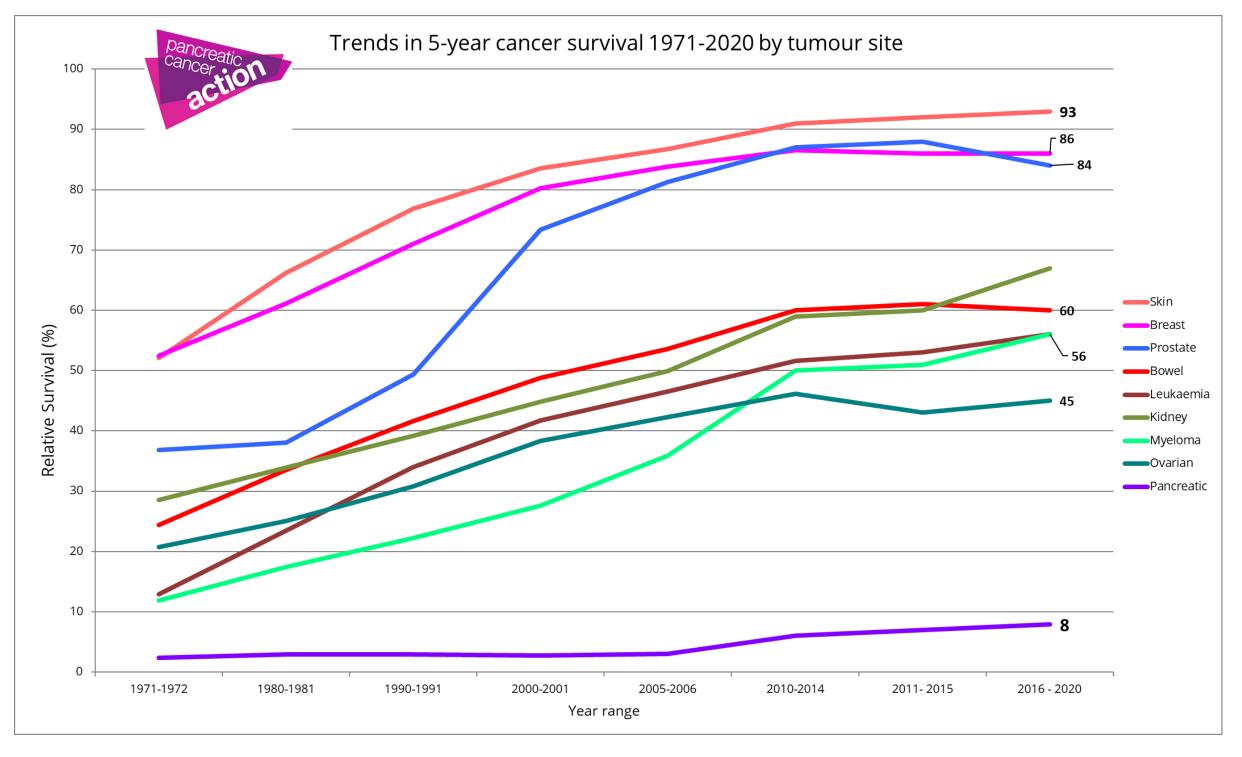








There have been huge improvements in survival for most cancers...



Sadly, the same isn't true for pancreatic cancer

Source: Cancer Research UK/ONS

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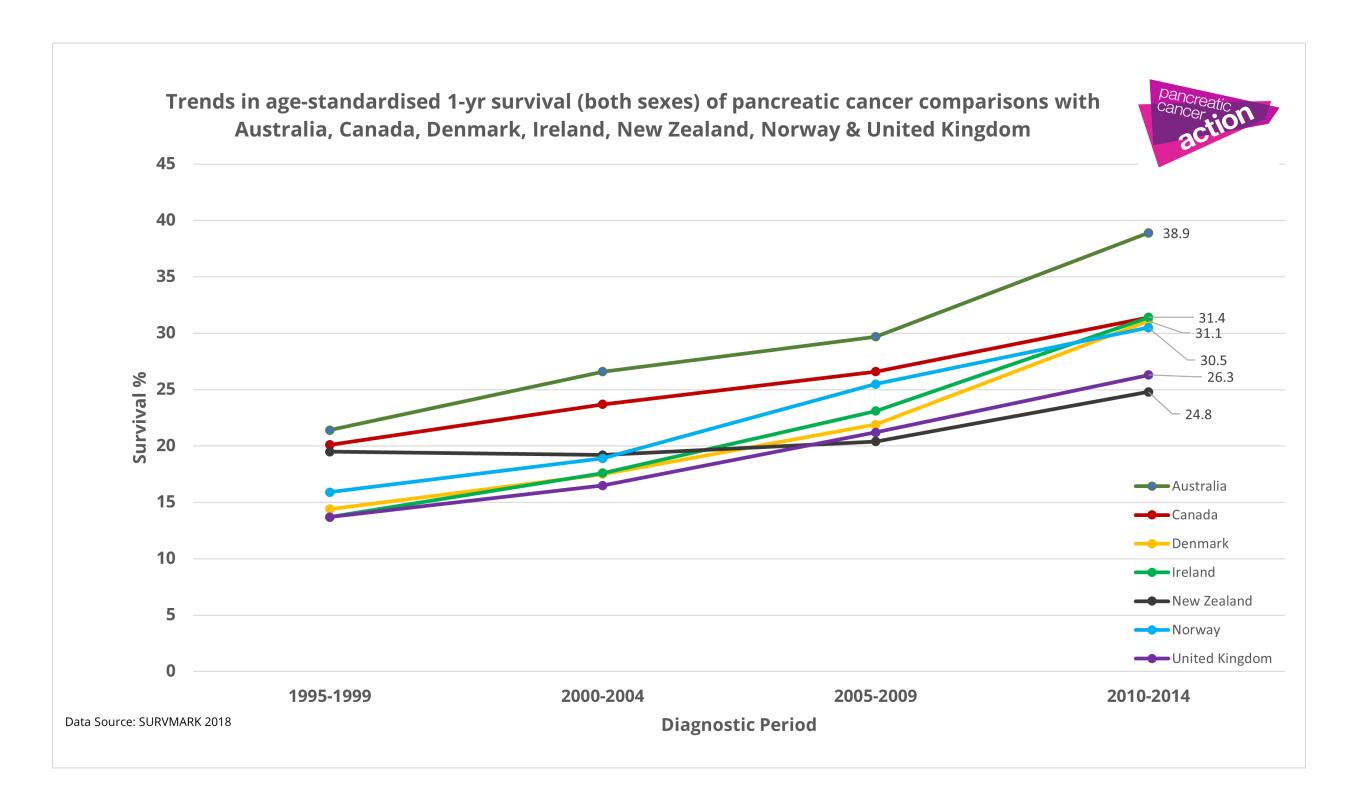








Some countries do better than others...











How can we better achieve early diagnosis and therefore survival for pancreatic cancer?

- More investment in research at EU level
- Funded awareness programmes for the public in every member state
- Primary care educational programmes
- End nihilism amongst clinicians and the public that 'nothing can be done' for pancreatic cancer patients
- Don't take away HOPE











Thank you for your attention!

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