

## **MALIGNANT NEOPLASM OF THE STOMACH: EPIDEMIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF HOSPITALIZATIONS IN THE NORTHERN REGION OF BRAZIL FROM 2020 TO 2024**

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**Introduction:** Malignant neoplasm of the stomach, or gastric cancer, is a malignant tumor with a high global mortality rate. Its etiology is primarily associated with prolonged exposure of the gastric mucosa to dietary factors such as excessive intake of salt, nitrates, and carbohydrates. In Brazil, stomach cancer represents a significant public health issue, mainly due to the difficulty of early detection, which results from its often late clinical presentation. These characteristics contribute to the disease remaining a constant focus of research and health interventions. **Objectives:** To analyze the epidemiological profile of hospitalizations due to malignant neoplasm of the stomach in the Northern Region of Brazil from 2020 to 2024. **Methods:** This is a descriptive epidemiological study with a cross-sectional, quantitative, and retrospective approach. Data were collected using the Hospital Information System of the Brazilian Unified Health System (SIH-SUS), available on DATASUS. Hospitalization cases due to malignant neoplasm of the stomach in the Northern Region of Brazil from 2020 to 2024 were analyzed, considering the variables: year of processing, federal unit, age group, race, and sex. **Results:** A total of 8,108 hospitalizations were recorded, with a progressive increase over the analyzed period, rising from 1,433 in 2020 to 1,977 in 2024—an increase of approximately 38%. Among the states, Pará accounted for the highest number of hospitalizations with 3,488 cases (42.8%), followed by Amazonas with 1,382 (17%), while Amapá and Roraima reported 241 and 306 cases, respectively. The age group analysis showed a gradual and consistent increase starting at age 5, with a significant rise from age 30 and a peak between 60 and 69 years, totaling 2,293 cases (28.2%). Regarding sex, there was a higher number of hospitalizations among men, with 5,377 cases (66.1%), compared to women, with 2,761 (33.9%). Most hospitalizations occurred among self-declared 'pardo' (mixed-race) individuals, with 6,754 cases (87.9%). **Conclusion:** The analysis revealed a progressive increase in hospitalizations due to malignant neoplasm of the stomach in the Northern Region of Brazil during the analyzed period. The state of Pará had the highest concentration of cases, suggesting regional disparities possibly linked to the local dietary profile, characterized by high consumption of processed and salty foods, which may contribute to a higher risk of developing gastric cancer. The predominance of hospitalizations among men, particularly those aged 60 to 69, and the majority of patients being self-declared as 'pardo' (mixed-race) indicate potential socioeconomic inequalities. The consistent increases observed in the variables 'year of processing' and 'age group'

highlight the severity of the comorbidity and the need for further research on this topic.

Therefore, it is essential to implement prevention strategies focused on nutritional education, early screening, and public policies aimed at reducing the disease burden and optimizing care within the Brazilian Unified Health System (SUS).

**Keywords:** Gastric cancer; epidemiology; public health policies.