

The rise in the average age at death has already been noted (p. 216). Deaths from causes that mainly affect children and young adults have declined. Diphtheria, for example, has been almost wiped out—in fact there was not a single death from diphtheria during 1959—and tuberculosis has been greatly reduced. On the other hand, the aging of the population has increased the proportion of deaths from certain causes that affect older people. Thus, cancer and diseases of the cardiovascular-renal systems now account for a substantially larger proportion of all deaths than formerly.

These trends indicate the remarkable success that has attended the attack by health authorities on the infective and contagious diseases which in the past have constituted such a great hazard in the early and young adult years of life. They have served similarly to emphasize the emergence of the chronic and degenerative conditions of later life as the targets toward which the public health programs of the future will be directed. In effect, Canada has shared the experience of most western nations in exchanging a high mortality in younger life for high morbidity in older age groups.

The Chart opposite shows death rates for the major cause groups from 1935-59.

13.—Deaths and Rates per 100,000 Population, according to the International Abbreviated List of 50 Causes, 1958 and 1959

International List No.		Cause of Death	Numbers of Deaths		Rates per 100,000 Population	
Abbreviated List	Detailed List		1958	1959	1958	1959
B 1	001-008	Tuberculosis of respiratory system.....	883	834	5.2	4.8
B 2	010-019	Tuberculosis, other forms.....	144	125	0.8	0.7
B 3	020-029	Syphilis and its sequelae.....	177	167	1.0	1.0
B 4	040	Typhoid fever.....	3	3	--	--
B 5	043	Cholera.....	—	—	—	—
B 6	045-048	Dysentery, all forms.....	25	20	0.1	0.1
B 7	050, 051	Scarlet fever and streptococcal sore throat..	6	26	--	0.1
B 8	055	Diphtheria.....	7	—	--	—
B 9	056	Whooping cough.....	40	46	0.2	0.3
B10	057	Meningococcal infections.....	68	52	0.4	0.3
B11	058	Plague.....	—	—	—	—
B12	080	Acute poliomyelitis.....	26	182	0.2	1.0
B13	084	Smallpox.....	—	—	—	—
B14	085	Measles.....	93	84	0.5	0.5
B15	100-108	Typhus and other rickettsial diseases.....	—	—	—	—
B16	110-117	Malaria.....	—	—	—	—
	030-039, 041, 042, 044, 049, 052-054,					
B17	059-074, 081-083, 086-096, 120-138	All other diseases classified as infective and parasitic.....	373	344	2.2	2.0
B18	140-205	Cancer (all malignant neoplasms).....	21,795	22,243	127.8	127.5
	(201)	Cancer.....	20,580	20,987	120.7	120.3
	(204)	Hodgkin's disease.....	255	254	1.5	1.5
	(204)	Leukæmia and aleukæmia.....	960	1,002	5.6	6.7
B19	210-239	Benign and unspecified neoplasms.....	294	333	1.7	1.9
B20	260	Diabetes mellitus.....	1,869	1,988	11.0	11.4
B21	290-293	Anæmias.....	398	338	2.3	1.9
B22	330-334	Vascular lesions affecting central nervous system.....	15,122	15,650	88.7	89.7
B23	340	Non-meningococcal meningitis.....	221	186	1.3	1.1
B24	400-402	Rheumatic fever.....	80	69	0.5	0.4
B25	410-416	Chronic rheumatic heart disease.....	1,402	1,437	8.2	8.2
B26	420-422	Arteriosclerotic and degenerative heart disease.....	38,853	40,970	227.9	234.9
B27	430-434	Other diseases of heart.....	2,044	2,150	12.0	12.3
B28	440-443	Hypertension with heart disease.....	3,710	3,687	21.8	21.1