Effects of A-bomb Radiation on Survivors

Mariko Mine, Yutaka Okumura, Hisayoshi Kondo and Hiroyuki Mori

Department of Biostatistics, Scientific Data Center for the Atomic Bomb Disaster, Nagasaki University School of Medicine

Summary: The relative risk of cancer in A-bomb survivors increased with radiation dose. In a dose range of 300-599 cGy, the relative risk of cancer was above 1 (p < 0.05 for male, p < 0.01 for female). The relative risk of noncancer for males was significantly lower than 1 in a dose range of 50-99 cGy (p < 0.05).

Introduction

Dose response relationship for cancer death has been observed in A-bomb survivors. We analysed the effect of A-bomb radiation on the risk of death and cause of death.

Materials and Methods

From a database of A-bomb survivors in Scientific Data Center for the Atomic Bomb Disaster, Nagasaki University, we selected 3456 survivors exposed to A-bomb radiation to analyse risk of death and cause of death and observed from 1970 to 1988 to analyse dose dependency of risk of death. The survivors were divided into 7 groups according to exposed dose: 1-29, 30-49, 50-99, 100-149, 150-199, 200-299, 300-599 cGy. Table 1 shows number of subjects and their mean doses. Age-matched controls of three times subjects, 3 x 3456, were selected. We used BMDP statistical software and significant test for the assumption was carried out with the Chi-square-test.

Table 1. Number of subjects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dose (cGy)</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Mean dose (cGy)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-29</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>18.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-49</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>39.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-99</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>69.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100-149</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>108.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150-199</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>167.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200-299</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>254.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300-599</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>435.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1,488</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results and Discussion

Table 2 shows the relative risk of death by all causes, cancer and noncancer. For death by all causes, the relative risk of males was 0.88 and 1.29 for the dose ranges of 50-99 cGy and of 300-599 cGy, respectively, and for females 0.94 and 1.55 for the dose ranges of 30-49 cGy and of 300-599 cGy, respectively. However, these low and high values were not statistically significant. The relative risk of cancer for males is 1.96 for the dose range of 300-599 cGy, and for females 1.73 and 2.79 for 200-299 cGy and 300-599 cGy, respectively. These high values for cancer were statistically significant (p < 0.05 for males and p < 0.01 for females). For noncancer, the relative risk for males is 0.65 for the dose range of 50-99 cGy. This was statistically significant (p<0.05). The relative risk of death by all causes, cancer and noncancer for males is shown in Fig. 1, and that for females in Fig. 2.

Table 3 shows number of deaths from specific cancer for males. The number in parenthesis is of control (observed number divided by 3), asterisks indicate that the number of deaths for exposed survivors was larger than for controls. The number of lung cancer for exposed survivors was larger than controls for all dose ranges. For the doses larger than 150 cGy, the number of liver cancer for exposed survivors was larger than controls.

Table 4 shows number of deaths from specific noncancerous disease for males. The asterisk indicates that the
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Fig. 1. Relative risk of death for males. **: p < 0.01

Table 3. Number of deaths from specific cancer (male)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Dose (cGy)</th>
<th>1-29</th>
<th>30-49</th>
<th>50-99</th>
<th>100-149</th>
<th>150-199</th>
<th>200-299</th>
<th>300-599</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stomach</td>
<td>8 (8.0)</td>
<td>4 (7.0)</td>
<td>8* (6.3)</td>
<td>2 (3.3)</td>
<td>4 (4.7)</td>
<td>9 (12.3)</td>
<td>3* (2.7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colon</td>
<td>1 (1.7)</td>
<td>1* (0.7)</td>
<td>0 (1.0)</td>
<td>0 (0.3)</td>
<td>1* (0.7)</td>
<td>2* (1.3)</td>
<td>0 (0.7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liver</td>
<td>2 (3.0)</td>
<td>2 (3.3)</td>
<td>5* (2.0)</td>
<td>2 (2.0)</td>
<td>7* (3.3)</td>
<td>9* (4.7)</td>
<td>2* (0.7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pancreas</td>
<td>0 (1.0)</td>
<td>0 (1.3)</td>
<td>1 (1.3)</td>
<td>0 (0.7)</td>
<td>1* (0.7)</td>
<td>2* (1.7)</td>
<td>0 (0.3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lung</td>
<td>2 (3.7)</td>
<td>6* (4.3)</td>
<td>5* (2.0)</td>
<td>5* (1.7)</td>
<td>3* (2.0)</td>
<td>8* (6.0)</td>
<td>3* (1.7)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leukemia</td>
<td>0 (0.3)</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
<td>0 (0.3)</td>
<td>1* (0.3)</td>
<td>1* (0.3)</td>
<td>0 (0.3)</td>
<td>1* (0.0)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. Number of deaths from specific noncancerous disease (male)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease</th>
<th>Dose (cGy)</th>
<th>1-29</th>
<th>30-49</th>
<th>50-99</th>
<th>100-149</th>
<th>150-199</th>
<th>200-299</th>
<th>300-599</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heart disease</td>
<td>11 (9.7)</td>
<td>10* (10.3)</td>
<td>9 (6.7)</td>
<td>6 (5.0)</td>
<td>6 (6.3)</td>
<td>13 (12.3)</td>
<td>3 (3.3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypertension disease</td>
<td>5 (3.0)</td>
<td>5 (0.7)</td>
<td>0* (1.3)</td>
<td>0* (2.3)</td>
<td>1* (2.3)</td>
<td>2 (2.0)</td>
<td>1* (1.3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cerebrovascular disease</td>
<td>13* (14.3)</td>
<td>10* (15.7)</td>
<td>4* (11.7)</td>
<td>4* (7.7)</td>
<td>8* (12.7)</td>
<td>25 (22.0)</td>
<td>5 (5.0)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pneumonia</td>
<td>11 (7.7)</td>
<td>9 (6.7)</td>
<td>3* (5.0)</td>
<td>4 (4.0)</td>
<td>4* (4.3)</td>
<td>9* (11.0)</td>
<td>2 (2.3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liver cirrhosis</td>
<td>4 (3.3)</td>
<td>3* (3.3)</td>
<td>0* (4.3)</td>
<td>0* (1.7)</td>
<td>3* (3.3)</td>
<td>4* (4.3)</td>
<td>0* (1.3)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>18* (24.0)</td>
<td>15* (17.3)</td>
<td>5* (11.0)</td>
<td>5* (5.7)</td>
<td>10 (9.3)</td>
<td>25* (32.0)</td>
<td>11 (9.0)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig. 2. Relative risk of death for females. **: p < 0.01

Table 5 shows number of deaths from specific cancer for females. For the doses from 200 to 599 cGy, the deaths from stomach cancer, pancreas cancer, lung cancer and breast cancer were larger than that for controls.

Table 6 shows number of deaths from specific noncancerous disease for females. The asterisk indicates that the number of deaths for exposed survivors is smaller than that for controls. Deaths whose relative risk was low in a dose range of 1-29 cGy were hypertension disease, cerebrovascular disease and liver cirrhosis.

The relative risk of cancer and of noncancer was analysed in respect of the age of exposed survivors at time of bombing (ATB). The relative risk of cancer for different ATB age groups for males is shown in Fig. 3. There was a tendency that the relative risk increased with radiation dose for each age group, but it was not significant statistically. The relative risk of noncancer for males for different ATB age groups is shown in Fig. 4. The relative risk was less than 1 for the doses from 50 cGy to 199 cGy for all ATB age groups.

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The relative risk of cancer and of noncancer was analysed in respect of the age of exposed survivors at time of bombing (ATB). The relative risk of cancer for different ATB age groups for males is shown in Fig. 3. There was a tendency that the relative risk increased with radiation dose for each age group, but it was not significant statistically. The relative risk of noncancer for males for different ATB age groups is shown in Fig. 4. The relative risk was less than 1 for the doses from 50 cGy to 199 cGy for all ATB age groups.
Table 5. Number of deaths from specific cancer (female)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>1-29</th>
<th>30-49</th>
<th>50-99</th>
<th>100-149</th>
<th>150-199</th>
<th>200-299</th>
<th>300-599</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stomach</td>
<td>7* (6.0)</td>
<td>3 (5.3)</td>
<td>3* (1.0)</td>
<td>4* (0.7)</td>
<td>2* (1.7)</td>
<td>4* (2.3)</td>
<td>4* (0.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colon</td>
<td>0 (2.3)</td>
<td>1 (1.3)</td>
<td>0 (0.3)</td>
<td>0 (0.3)</td>
<td>0 (0.3)</td>
<td>0 (1.0)</td>
<td>0 (0.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liver</td>
<td>3* (2.0)</td>
<td>0 (1.3)</td>
<td>1* (0.7)</td>
<td>2* (0.3)</td>
<td>2* (0.7)</td>
<td>1* (0.3)</td>
<td>0 (0.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pancreas</td>
<td>2* (1.3)</td>
<td>0 (1.0)</td>
<td>0 (0.7)</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
<td>1* (0.0)</td>
<td>2* (0.0)</td>
<td>1 (0.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lung</td>
<td>3 (3.0)</td>
<td>4* (3.3)</td>
<td>2* (1.7)</td>
<td>0 (2.0)</td>
<td>4* (2.0)</td>
<td>3* (1.3)</td>
<td>2* (0.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breast</td>
<td>3* (2.0)</td>
<td>0 (1.0)</td>
<td>0 (1.0)</td>
<td>0 (0.3)</td>
<td>3* (1.0)</td>
<td>1* (0.7)</td>
<td>1* (0.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uterus</td>
<td>1 (1.3)</td>
<td>3* (0.7)</td>
<td>0 (0.3)</td>
<td>2* (0.3)</td>
<td>0 (0.7)</td>
<td>0 (0.7)</td>
<td>1* (0.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leukemia</td>
<td>2* (0.3)</td>
<td>1* (0.0)</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
<td>2* (0.0)</td>
<td>0 (0.0)</td>
<td>1* (0.0)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Parenthesis: number of control
*: number for exposed group is larger than for control

Table 6. Number of deaths from specific noncancerous disease (female)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disease</th>
<th>1-29</th>
<th>30-49</th>
<th>50-99</th>
<th>100-149</th>
<th>150-199</th>
<th>200-299</th>
<th>300-599</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heart disease</td>
<td>22* (22.7)</td>
<td>13 (13.0)</td>
<td>5* (5.3)</td>
<td>7 (4.3)</td>
<td>3* (5.7)</td>
<td>4* (6.7)</td>
<td>5 (3.7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypertension disease</td>
<td>5* (5.3)</td>
<td>8 (4.3)</td>
<td>0* (2.3)</td>
<td>2 (1.3)</td>
<td>2 (1.7)</td>
<td>2 (1.7)</td>
<td>0* (0.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cerebrovascular disease</td>
<td>18* (21.0)</td>
<td>14* (14.3)</td>
<td>12 (7.0)</td>
<td>7 (5.7)</td>
<td>11 (8.3)</td>
<td>7 (5.3)</td>
<td>6 (3.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pneumonia</td>
<td>8 (8.0)</td>
<td>4* (5.7)</td>
<td>4 (2.7)</td>
<td>2 (2.3)</td>
<td>4 (2.3)</td>
<td>2 (2.3)</td>
<td>2 (2.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liver cirrhosis</td>
<td>1* (2.7)</td>
<td>1 (0.3)</td>
<td>1 (0.3)</td>
<td>1 (0.7)</td>
<td>1 (0.7)</td>
<td>0* (1.0)</td>
<td>0* (0.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>21* (27.0)</td>
<td>16* (19.0)</td>
<td>8 (5.3)</td>
<td>3* (7.7)</td>
<td>10* (10.7)</td>
<td>12 (10.0)</td>
<td>4 (3.3)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Parenthesis: number of control
*: number for exposed group is smaller than for controls

Fig. 3. Relative risk of cancer for different age at time of bombing (ATB) for males.

The relative risk of cancer for females for different ATB age groups was shown in Fig. 5. There was a tendency of increase in the relative risk with radiation dose for groups of ATB ages of 0-19 and 20-34 years old. In Fig. 6, the relative risk of noncancer for females is shown. There was no clear dependency of age and dose.

Fig. 4. Relative risk of noncancer for different age at time of bombing (ATB) for males.
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Fig. 5. Relative risk of cancer for different age at time of bombing (ATB) for females.

Fig. 6. Relative risk of noncancer for different age at time of bombing (ATB) for females.

References


