



Recommendation from the Working Group on Cancer Services on the use of tumour staging systems (September 2017)

TNM Classification of Malignant Tumours, 8th edition (or TNM 8) has recently been published by both the American Joint Committee on Cancer (AJCC) and the Union for International Cancer Control (UICC).

There is close collaboration between the UICC, AJCC and the International Federation of Gynecology and Obstetrics (FIGO) to maintain uniformity in cancer staging systems that are in worldwide use. However, there are some minor differences between UICC and AJCC TNM edition 8 for staging tumours in some sites. Where there is a difference, the preferred choice is UICC TNM (in alignment with the rest of Europe), unless there are specific clinical reasons to prefer AJCC TNM.

A position statement on whether TNM 8 should be implemented and the date for implementation has been collated by the RCPATH sub-specialty leads in consultation with dataset authors and allied professional organisations (including relevant screening services). A recommended date for implementation is also given.

Existing RCPATH datasets will be updated with any changes to the staging system as soon as possible (and preferably ahead of the proposed implementation date).

The aim of the RCPATH will be to transition to TNM 8 (for all sites where transition is deemed appropriate) by 1 January 2018.

If it is felt clinically necessary to implement the newer staging system locally ahead of any announcement, the advice is to give both the current staging system and the new staging system in the report. It is considered good practice to always state the staging system and version used in any report, and this will be particularly important during 2017 when there will be a transition period between staging systems.

It is recommended that pathology reports should always indicate which version (UICC or AJCC) and which edition (7 or 8) of TNM is being used.

We are grateful to the subspecialty leads and dataset authors in histopathology for their contributions.

Dr Brian Rous

Chair of the Working Group on Cancer Services



Subspecialty	Recommended staging system	Date for implementation of TNM 8	Comment
ENT, oral and maxillofacial pathology – Richard Allibone and Keith Hunter			
Mucosal malignancies of the oral cavity	UICC TNM 7		UICC TNM 8 for head and neck tumours has not yet been accepted by clinicians and pathologists as suitable for both prognosis and the management of malignancies at all head and neck sites. Further discussion is required to determine how the transition from TNM 7 to TNM 8 can be safely managed. As such, it is recommended that UICC TNM 7 should continue to be collected from 1st January 2018. Data to support UICC TNM 8 should be collected in addition to UICC TNM7.
Mucosal malignancies of the pharynx	UICC TNM 7		
Mucosal malignancies of the larynx	UICC TNM 7		
Mucosal malignancies of the nasal cavities and paranasal sinuses	UICC TNM 7		
Nodal excisions and neck dissection specimens associated with head and neck carcinomas	UICC TNM 7		
Salivary gland neoplasms	UICC TNM 7		
Liver pathology – Stefan Hubscher			
Liver	UICC TNM 7. UICC TNM 8 from 1 Jan 2018	1 Jan 2018	
Endocrine pathology – Tim Stephenson			
Thyroid gland	UICC TNM 7. UICC TNM 8 from 1 Jan 2018	1 Jan 2018	Dataset being updated
Parathyroid gland	None	Not applicable	
Adult adrenal gland	UICC TNM 7/ENSAT. UICC TNM 8/ENSAT from 1 Jan 2018	1 Jan 2018	
Pulmonary pathology – Andrew Nicholson			
Lung	UICC TNM 7. UICC TNM 8 from 01/01/2018	1 Jan 2018	Dataset being updated
Mesothelioma	UICC TNM 7. UICC TNM 8 from 01/01/2018	1 Jan 2018	Dataset being updated
Thymic epithelial tumours	UICC TNM 8	Immediately	

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Osteoarticular pathology – Charles Mangham			
Primary bone tumours	UICC TNM 7. UICC TNM 8 from 1 Jan 2018	1 Jan 2018	
Soft tissue sarcomas	UICC TNM 7. UICC TNM 8 from 1 Jan 2018	1 Jan 2018	Updated dataset already available
Breast pathology – Rahul Deb			
Breast disease in surgical excision specimens	UICC TNM 7. UICC TNM 8 from 1 Jan 2018	1 Jan 2018	UICC TNM 7 and UICC TNM are identical.
Ophthalmic pathology – Hardeep Singh Mudhar			
Conjunctival melanoma	UICC TNM 7. UICC TNM 8 from 1 Jan 2018	1 Jan 2018	Datasets being updated
Uveal melanoma	UICC TNM 7. UICC TNM 8 from 1 Jan 2018		
Retinoblastoma	UICC TNM 7. UICC TNM 8 from 1 Jan 2018		
Urological pathology – Dan Berney			
Penis	UICC TNM 7. UICC TNM 8 from 1 Jan 2018	1 Jan 2018	There are significant differences between AJCC and UICC 8 in the printed versions. Substantial errata have now been published, but differences remain particularly for staging of testicular tumours. As such, specific guidance will be provided in due course on the recording epididymal and soft tissue invasion.
Prostate	UICC TNM 7. UICC TNM 8 from 1 Jan 2018		
Testis	UICC TNM 7. UICC TNM 8 from 1 Jan 2018		
Adult kidney	UICC TNM 7. UICC TNM 8 from 1 Jan 2018		
Urinary collecting system	UICC TNM 7. UICC TNM 8 from 1 Jan 2018		
Haematopathology – Stefan Dojcinov			
Hodgkin and non-Hodgkin lymphoma	Ann Arbor staging	Not applicable	

Subspecialty	Recommended staging system	Date for implementation of TNM 8	Comment
Paediatric pathology – Jo McPartland			
Peripheral neuroblastic tumours	International Society of Paediatric Oncology (SIOP) staging system	Not applicable	
Nephroblastoma (renal tumours)	International Staging System for Neuroblastoma (INSS) and also International Neuroblastoma Risk Group (INRG) Staging System		
Gynaecological pathology – Raji Ganesan			
Vulval	FIGO (2009)	1 Jan 2018	Datasets being updated
Cervix	Either FIGO (2009) staging system and UICC 7, or FIGO and recording of lymph node status. From 1 Jan 2018 use either FIGO (2009) staging system and UICC 8, or FIGO and recording of lymph node status.		
Endometrium	FIGO (2009)	1 Jan 2018	Datasets being updated
Uterine sarcomas	FIGO (2009)		
Ovary	FIGO (2013)		
Neuropathology – Colin Smith			
Central nervous system and pituitary gland	Not applicable	Not applicable	

Subspecialty	Recommended staging system	Date for implementation of TNM 8	Comment
Gastrointestinal pathology – Roger Feakins			
Joint oesophageal and stomach	UICC TNM 7. UICC TNM 8 from 1 Jan 2018	1 Jan 2018	Dataset being updated
Small intestinal cancer	UICC TNM 7. UICC TNM 8 from 1 Jan 2018	1 Jan 2018	Dataset not yet initiated
Colorectal	UICC TNM 5. UICC TNM 8 from 1 Jan 2018	1 Jan 2018	Dataset being updated
Anal cancers	UICC TNM 7. UICC TNM 8 from 1 Jan 2018	1 Jan 2018	Dataset being updated
Gastrointestinal stromal tumours	UICC TNM 7. UICC TNM 8 from 1 Jan 2018	1 Jan 2018	Dataset being updated
Appendiceal tumours	UICC TNM 7. UICC TNM 8 from 1 Jan 2018	1 Jan 2018	Dataset being updated
Neuroendocrine tumours of the gastrointestinal tract	ENETS TNM staging system	Not applicable	Dataset being updated
Bile duct and pancreas	UICC TNM 7. UICC TNM 8 from 1 Jan 2018	1 Jan 2018	Dataset being updated
Dermatopathology – Lynne Jamieson			
Cutaneous basal cell carcinoma	AJCC TNM 7. UICC TNM 8 from 1 Jan 2018	1 Jan 2018	
Cutaneous squamous cell carcinoma and regional lymph nodes	AJCC TNM 7. UICC TNM 8 from 1 Jan 2018	1 Jan 2018	
Cutaneous adnexal carcinoma and regional lymph nodes	AJCC TNM 7. UICC TNM 8 from 1 Jan 2018	1 Jan 2018	
Cutaneous malignant melanoma and regional lymph nodes	AJCC TNM 7. UICC TNM 8 from 1 Jan 2018	1 Jan 2018	
Cutaneous Merkel cell carcinoma and regional lymph nodes	AJCC TNM 7. UICC TNM 8 from 1 Jan 2018	1 Jan 2018	
Cutaneous lymphomas	AJCC TNM 7. UICC TNM 8 from 1 Jan 2018	1 Jan 2018	