

Hospital admissions rose by 3.9% in 2006

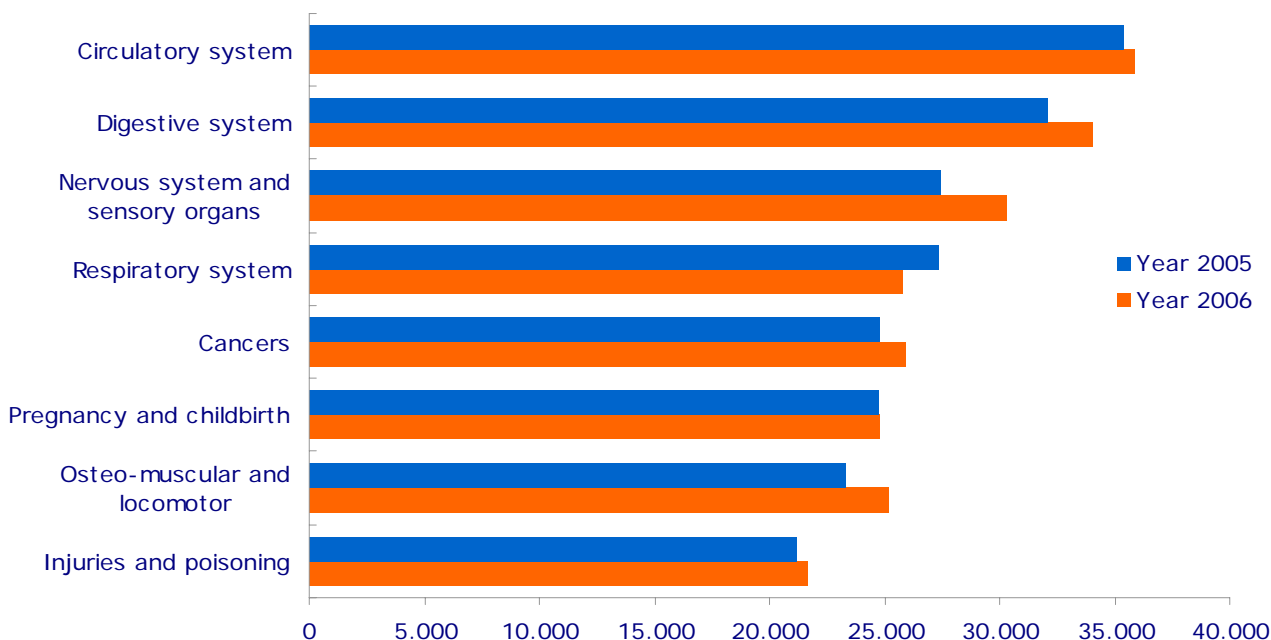
76% of patients who were discharged were treated in public hospitals

The acute hospitals of the A.C. of the Basque Country registered 291,332 discharges in 2006 corresponding to the 228,828 people who had been hospitalised or admitted to hospital day units, according to Eustat data, meaning 3.9% more than the previous year. The average length of stay per patient fell from 5.5 days the previous year to 5.1 days in 2006.

Admissions as a result of **diseases of the nervous system and sensory organs** rose by 10.5% in 2006, meaning that it was the third cause of admission to the acute hospitals of the A.C. of the Basque Country. Cataracts, which were chiefly treated in hospital day units, were the most widely-diagnosed pathology. Elsewhere, hospitalisations due to **respiratory diseases fell by 5.9%**, especially cases of acute bronchitis, pneumonia and influenza.

76% of patients who were discharged in 2006 were treated in public hospitals and 24% in private ones. By sex, women, due to the weight of admissions due to pregnancy and childbirth, outnumbered men in the amount of hospitalisations (51.3% of women compared to 48.7% of men). The most common age for hospitalisation among men was 73, while for women it was 78 (not taking pregnancy and childbirth into account).

Graph 1.- Patients discharged from acute hospitals by most common major diagnostic groups, 2005-2006



Source: Eustat

Circulatory system diseases, with 12.3% of the total number of discharges in 2006, **continued to be the main cause of hospitalisation**, unlike the State as a whole, where it occupied second position, following pregnancy, childbirth and puerperium (2005). Within this group, varicose veins, cardiac insufficiency, coronary arteriosclerosis, and arrhythmias were the pathologies causing the greatest number of hospitalisations.

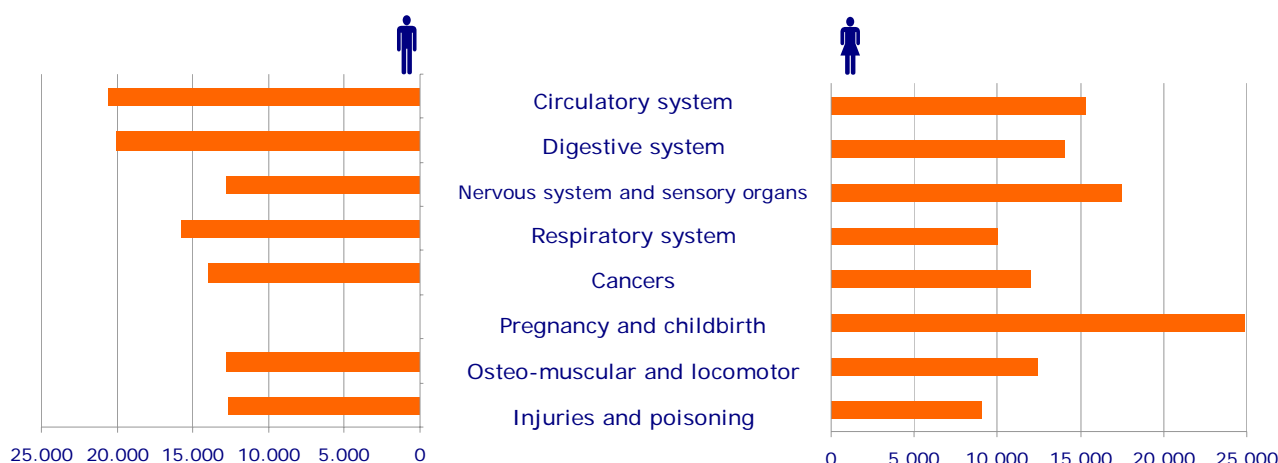
Admissions due to digestive system diseases, which represented 11.7% of the total and which conformed **the second most frequent cause of hospital admission, rose by 6% in 2006**. Among the most frequent cases were inguinal hernias and other abdominal hernias (23.6%), gallstones (15%) and acute appendicitis (7%).

Diseases of the nervous system and sensory organs, which experienced a 10.5% increase in 2006, occupied the third position (10.4% of the total), with the main cause of admission being cataracts in 59% of cases.

Neoplasms (tumours) and the group of respiratory system diseases, with the same percentage (8.9% of the total), appeared in fourth position. Hospitalisations caused by tumours increased by 4.5% in 2006, especially those located in the colon, respiratory system and uterus. On the other hand admissions due to respiratory system diseases fell by 5.9%, most notable among these being bronchitis, pneumonia and influenza, respiratory infections with the greatest incidence among people aged 65 and over (affecting men more than women) and whose effect may have been reduced by vaccination campaigns.

The diagnoses that led to the greatest number of readmissions were maintenance chemotherapy treatment, with greatest incidence in the 45 to 64 age bracket, and chronic bronchitis and cardiac insufficiency, most common among men aged 65 and over.

Graph 2.- Patients discharged from acute hospitals by major diagnostic groups by sex, 2006



Source: EUSTAT

The order of the most common group of diseases varied according to sex. **Circulatory system diseases were the main cause of hospital admission among men and the third for women**. Second most common for men were those in the digestive group and in third place, respiratory diseases, while for women the first position was pregnancy, childbirth and puerperium and nervous system and sensory organ diseases.

Associating the type of pathology with sex and age shows that the most common hospital diagnoses were: chronic tonsillitis and adenoids and asthma among the under-14s; between the ages of 15 and 44, internal knee disorders, pilonidal cysts (lower back) and inguinal hernias among men, whereas for women it was pregnancy, childbirth and puerperium, followed by female sterility and varicose veins. In the 45-64 age group the most common for men were internal knee disorders and inguinal hernias and for women varicose veins and upper limb neuropathy, and for those aged 65 and over, cataracts, followed by chronic bronchitis in men and osteoarthritis in women.

As regards the most frequent hospitals surgical operations in 2006, in first place came operations on the musculoskeletal system, especially on the knee and hip. They were followed by operations on the digestive system, of which repair of hernias were the most common, especially in men aged 45-64, and operations on the eye, with operations on cataracts most common among people aged 65 and over.

Table 1.- Patients discharged by major diagnostic groups

	2005	2006	Δ %
Total	280.441	291.332	3,9
Illnesses of the circulatory system	35.391	35.852	1,3
Diseases of the digestive system	32.118	34.056	6,0
Illnesses of the nervous system and the sensory organs	27.416	30.299	10,5
Illnesses of the respiratory system	27.402	25.784	-5,9
Neoplasia (tumors)	24.843	25.951	4,5
Pregnancy, birth and puerperium	24.701	24.841	0,6
Osteo-myoarticular system diseases	23.285	25.205	8,2
Injuries and poisoning	21.221	21.674	2,1
Illnesses of the genitourinary system	16.147	16.637	3,0
Badly defined symptoms, signs and conditions	12.653	12.983	2,6
Mental problems	5.048	5.015	-0,7
Endocrine, nutritional and metabolic diseases	4.092	4.430	8,3
Skin and subcutaneous tissue diseases	4.081	5.165	26,6
Infectious and parasitical diseases	3.592	3.664	2,0
Blood and hematopoietic organ diseases	2.999	3.193	6,5
Congenital anomalies	2.401	2.411	0,4
Diseases originating in the perinatal period	1.822	1.845	1,3
Others	11.229	12.327	9,8

Source: Eustat

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