

Biost 517
Applied Biostatistics I
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Scott S. Emerson, M.D., Ph.D.
Professor of Biostatistics
University of Washington

Lecture 14:
Two Sample Inference with Right Censored
Data

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Lecture Outline
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- Comparing Independent Proportions
 - Large Samples (Censored)
 - Using Kaplan-Meier Estimates
- Comparing Hazard Functions
 - Logrank Test
 - Wilcoxon Test for Censored Data
- Comparing Quantiles
 - Parametric Accelerated Failure Time Models

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Right Censored Data
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Right Censored Data
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- Recall from Lecture 6: Censored variables
 - A special type of missing data (the exact value is not always known)
 - Right censoring: for some observations it is only known that the true value exceeds some threshold
 - Left censoring: for some observations it is only known that the true value is below some threshold
 - Interval censoring: for some observations it is only known that the true value is between some thresholds

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Examples

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- PSA data set
 - Subjects were followed with serial PSAs
 - Interested in time to relapse
 - Some still in remission at time of analysis
 - (Ignoring these subjects is ignoring successes)
- University salary data set
 - Interest is in sex discrimination
 - Interested in time to promotion from associate
 - Some subjects have not yet been promoted
 - (Ignoring these subjects may be ignoring discrimination)

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Descriptive Statistics

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- Sample mean, sample median (and other quantiles), sample standard deviation and variance are not appropriate
- Instead, descriptive statistics must be computed from Kaplan-Meier estimates
 - Only exception: You could use binomial proportions to estimate survival to the first censoring time
 - E.g., PSA data: All subjects followed at least 24 months

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Noninformative Censoring

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- Recall: Our estimation methods only appropriate if censoring is not informative about subjects who were either more or less likely to have an event in the immediate future
 - Censored subjects must look like a random sample of those at risk at time of censoring
 - (Later we shall say that they are a random sample from all subjects at risk having similar modeled covariates)

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Comparing Independent Proportions

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Large Samples with Right Censored Data

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Kaplan-Meier Estimates

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- Estimate $S(t) = Pr(T^0 > c)$ for arbitrary c
 - Nonparametric
 - Works for all distributions
 - (Also works for uncensored data)
 - Consistent for true value in infinite samples
 - Can derive estimates of quantiles
 - Can only estimate mean if estimated survival curve goes to 0
 - But can define “restricted mean” up to some time

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Approximate Distribution

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- If interested in $\theta = S(c) = Pr(T^0 \geq c)$ in presence of right censoring

Kaplan - Meier estimates for i th group

$$\theta_i = \hat{S}_i(c) = \prod_{j: t_j \leq c} \left(1 - \frac{d_{ij}}{n_{ij}} \right) \sim N \left(S_i(c), [se(\hat{S}_i(c))]^2 \right)$$

(with $se(\hat{S}_i(c))$ from Greenwood's formula)

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Stata: Kaplan-Meier Commands

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- Syntax for “setting survival data”
 - `“stset endtime eventind, t0(entrytime)”`
 - *endtime*: name of the variable measuring the time at the end of the interval
 - *eventind*: name of an indicator (0 or 1) variable indicating event status at the end of the interval
 - *entrytime*: name of the variable specifying the time at the start of the interval
 - (does not need to be supplied)
 - `“stset, clear”` resets the data set

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Stata: Kaplan-Meier Commands

.....

- Syntax for getting estimates, plots
 - Plotting survival curves
 - `“sts graph”`
 - `“sts graph, atrisk”`
 - `“sts graph, cens(s)”`
 - Listing survival estimates
 - `“sts list”`
 - Saving survival estimates
 - `“sts gen newvar = s”`

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Two Group Comparisons

.....

- To compare survival probabilities, we would compute SE for each group individually, then use methods for combining estimates

For independent $\hat{\theta}_1 \sim N(\theta_1, se_1^2)$; $\hat{\theta}_2 \sim N(\theta_2, se_2^2)$

$$\hat{\theta}_1 + \hat{\theta}_2 \sim N(\theta_1 + \theta_2, se_1^2 + se_2^2)$$

$$\hat{\theta}_1 - \hat{\theta}_2 \sim N(\theta_1 - \theta_2, se_1^2 + se_2^2)$$

$$\hat{\theta}_1 / \hat{\theta}_2 \sim N\left(\frac{\theta_1}{\theta_2}, \frac{1}{\theta_2^2} \left(se_1^2 + \frac{\theta_1^2}{\theta_2^2} se_2^2 \right)\right)$$

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Two Group Inference

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- As with any (approximately) normally distributed estimator, CI and P values are computed using

100(1 - α)% confidence interval

$$(est) \pm z_{1-\alpha/2} \times (std\ err)$$

Normalized Z statistic for $H_0 : \theta = \theta_0$

$$Z = \frac{(est) - (null\ hyp)}{(std\ err)}$$

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Example: PSA Data

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- Men with prostate cancer
 - Hormonal treatment
 - Followed for signs of progression
- Interested in estimating probability of remaining in remission for three years
 - Testing hypothesis that three year survival differs between bone scan score less than 3 or bone scan score equals 3

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Example: Preparing Data

.....

- Reading in data (note string variable)


```
. infile ... obstime str8 inrem using psa.txt
```
- Creating indicator of relapse


```
. g relapse = 0
            . replace relapse = 1 if inrem=="no"
```
- "Setting" survival variables


```
. stset obstime relapse
```

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Dichotomizing Bone Scan Score

- Method 1 (must consider missing data)
 - . g bss3= 0
 - . replace bss3=1 if bss==3
 - . replace bss3=. if bss==.
- Method 2 (recode handles missing data)
 - . g bss3= bss
 - . recode bss3 1/2=0 3=1

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Stata: KM Listing

```

.....
. sts list, by(bss3) at(12 24 36 48)
Beg.          Surv   Std.
-----
Time Total Fail   Fctn Error [95% Conf Int]
bss3=0
 12   18   1   0.9444 0.0540   0.6664 0.9920
 24   14   3   0.7778 0.0980   0.5110 0.9102
 36   12   1   0.7130 0.1092   0.4398 0.8699
 48    6   3   0.4801 0.1356   0.2101 0.7082
bss3=1
 12   22  10   0.6667 0.0861   0.4692 0.8047
 24   15   6   0.4667 0.0911   0.2839 0.6304
 36    9   5   0.2963 0.0841   0.1464 0.4630
 48    2   4   0.1058 0.0659   0.0209 0.2713
    
```

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Stata: Difference and SE

- Three year survival probabilities
 - Bone scan score < 3: 0.7130 (SE 0.1092)
 - Bone scan score = 3: 0.2963 (SE 0.0841)
- Estimated diff in 3 year survival probability
 - . display 0.7130 - 0.2963
 - .4167
- Standard error of estimated difference
 - . display sqrt(0.1092^2 + 0.0841^2)
 - .13783124

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Stata: 95% CI and P value

- 95% confidence interval: 0.147 to 0.687
 - . display invnorm(.975)
 - 1.959964
 - . display .4167 - invnorm(.975) * 0.13783124
 - .14655573
 - . display .4167 + invnorm(.975) * 0.13783124
 - .68684427
- Two-sided P value : P = 0.0025
 - (note use of negative)
 - . display 2 * normprob(- .4167/.13783124)
 - .00250065

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Interpretation

- The Kaplan-Meier estimate of difference in survival is that men with a bone scan score less than 3 have an absolute improved 3 year survival of 41.7% relative to $bss=3$
- With 95% confidence, such an observation is not consistent with a true absolute improvement less than 14.7% or greater than 68.7%
- Based on the P value of 0.0025, we reject the null hypothesis of no association between bone scan score and 3 year survival prob

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Comparing Hazard Functions

Logrank Test

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Scientific Questions

- With time to event data, we are generally interested in probability that an event will occur in a specified time
- Right censored data presented problems, because the measurement of events was over varying amounts of time
 - Effect modification by time?
 - Confounding by time?
 - Increased precision by accounting for time?

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General Strategy

- We want to use methods that adjust for the time of observation
- Kaplan-Meier estimates at a fixed time
- Logrank and modified Wilcoxon statistics by averaging effects over time

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Hazard Function

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- With censored data, we often compare probability distns using hazard functions

- Hazard = Instantaneous risk of an event
 - Among subjects at risk of an event, what is the probability of having an event in the next instant

- Advantage of using hazard with censored data
 - Only need to consider subjects currently at risk
 - Only need to consider whether they have an event right then

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Hazard Function

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- Estimates of the hazard at each time look somewhat like a binomial proportion

- We do not often estimate the hazard function over time

- However, we do compare hazard functions
 - Usually we estimate a hazard ratio: relative risk of an event
 - We want to average the estimates of the hazard ratio over all times

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Stratified Analyses

.....

- Recall that we are often interested in comparing groups within strata
 - Confounding:
 - Comparisons within strata are all similar, but failure to stratify results in a comparison that is misleading due to bias
 - There are nuances here as we go from analyses of means to analyses of nonlinear summary measures (e.g., odds- more later)
 - Interactions:
 - Comparisons within strata result in different estimates

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Adjusting for Covariates

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- We can remove confounding by “adjusting” for the confounder using a stratified test statistic

- “Adjustment” for a covariate means making comparisons between subjects who have similar levels of that covariate
 - E.g., in FEV data, compare smoking children to nonsmokers of same age, height
 - Average the differences seen in age, height strata

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Role of Effect Modification

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- Adjustment for a covariate does not remove interactions
 - Interactions means that the question has different answers in different strata
- Adjustment for a covariate will merely average the effect across strata
 - Usually weighted by the sample size in each stratum

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Stratified Estimates

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- Obtained by combining estimates from each (independent) stratum
- Generally, best to average the estimates (sometimes weighted) rather than Z scores
- SEs for the stratified estimates are obtained using properties of independent random variables
 - Standard errors are the sum of squared standard errors from the independent strata

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Example

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- Effect of hepatomegaly on survival after adjustment for sex?
 - Summarize response by 5 year survival
 - Hepatomegaly effect by sex: For each sex, compute difference in survival across hepatomegaly groups
 - Adjusted measure of effect: Compute the average difference between hepatomegaly effects
 - Usually a weighted average

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SE for Stratified Estimates

.....

	Males	Females
Hepatomegaly	$\hat{\theta}_{M1} \sim N(\theta_{M1}, se(\hat{\theta}_{M1}))$	$\hat{\theta}_{F1} \sim N(\theta_{F1}, se(\hat{\theta}_{F1}))$
No Hepatomegaly	$\hat{\theta}_{M0} \sim N(\theta_{M0}, se(\hat{\theta}_{M0}))$	$\hat{\theta}_{F0} \sim N(\theta_{F0}, se(\hat{\theta}_{F0}))$
	↓	
Weighted average	$p(\hat{\theta}_{M1} - \hat{\theta}_{M0}) - (1-p)(\hat{\theta}_{F1} - \hat{\theta}_{F0})$	
Approx Distn	$\sim N(\text{mean} = p(\theta_{M1} - \theta_{M0}) - (1-p)(\theta_{F1} - \theta_{F0}),$	
	$se = \sqrt{p^2(se^2(\hat{\theta}_{M1}) + se^2(\hat{\theta}_{M0})) + (1-p)^2(se^2(\hat{\theta}_{F1}) + se^2(\hat{\theta}_{F0}))}$	

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Mantel-Haenszel Statistic

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- Generally regarded as the best choice of methods for comparing binary data across strata

- Based on the odds rather than the proportion
 - It is rare that we might expect the difference in proportions to be constant across strata

- Other methods can be based on the asymptotic distribution of the log odds
 - (More on these methods next quarter)

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Logrank Test

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- The Mantel-Haenszel test is also the basis for a very popular method of comparing censored survival data across populations: The logrank statistic
 - The data are stratified by time of event
 - Often only a single event is observed in each stratum
 - Stratified estimates of the odds ratio are obtained

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Noninformative Censoring

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- Most often the same subjects are used in several different strata

- Noninformative censoring argues that the estimates are independent across strata asymptotically

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Tests Equality of Hazards

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- Equal hazard functions implies equal distributions
 - The P value for this test is interpretable as a test that the survival distributions are similar for the two groups

- This test is more powerful when the true alternative is “proportional hazards”
 - Proportional hazards = constant risk ratio over time
 - Proportional hazards regression will provide estimates of the risk ratio

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Logrank Test: Stata Commands

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- The logrank test can be obtained from Stata using the "sts test" command (after defining survival variables using "stset")
 - "sts test *groupvar*, logrank"
 - *groupvar* indicates the groups to be compared
 - logrank test is default
 - P value based on a chi square statistic
 - Hence a two-sided P value
 - (Obtaining a one-sided P value is deferred until we discuss proportional hazards regression next quarter)

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Example: PSA Survival by bss

.....

```
. sts test bss3
Log-rank test for equality of survivor functions
```

bss3	Events	Events
	observed	expected
0	9	17.18
1	25	16.82
Total	34	34.00

```
chi2(1) = 8.30
Pr>chi2 = 0.0040
```

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Example: Interpretation

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- Based on the two-sided P value of 0.004, we reject the null hypothesis of equal relapse free survival probabilities between the bone scan score groups
 - (Because the expected events are less than observed in the bss=3 group, we can presume that the higher bss is associated with worse relapse free survival)

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Hazard Ratio Estimates

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- Logrank test does not give estimates
 - However, it is closely related to "proportional hazards regression" ("Cox regression")
 - Provides estimates of the (average) hazard ratio over time
- Hazard ratio
 - Groups with higher hazards have higher event rates
 - Hazard ratio greater than 1 = Worse "survival"

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Proportional Hazard Regression

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- HR estimates approximately normal in large samples
- Stata commands
 - "stcox groupvar, robust"
 - "robust" eliminates need for proportional hazards
 - Gives hazard ratio, 95% CI
 - CI is computed on log hazard ratio scale
 - P values
 - "Wald test" (based on approximately normal estimate)
 - "Likelihood ratio test"
 - ("Score test" would be the logrank test)

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Example: PSA Survival by bss

.....

```
. stcox bss3, robust
No. of subjects = 48      Number of obs = 48
No. of failures = 34     Time at risk = 1408
                          LR chi2(1) = 8.35
Log likelihood = -106.9   Prob > chi2 = 0.0038
```

Robust						
t	HazRat	StdErr	z	P> z	[95% CI]	
bss3	2.96	1.11	2.89	0.004	1.42	6.16

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Example: Interpretation

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- We estimate that at any given time the risk of relapse in men with bss=3 tends to be 2.96 times that of men with lower bss
- 95% CI suggests these results typical if true risk of relapse with bss=3 is 1.42 to 6.16 times that in men with lower bss
- Based on P value of 0.004 we would reject null hypothesis of no association between relapse and bss

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Comparing Quantiles

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Parametric Models
for Censored Data

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Parametric Models for Censored Data

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- There are times that inference for censored data is based on parametric models
 - Accelerated failure time models
 - Assume a constant ratio between groups for all quantiles of survivor distribution
 - E.g., dogs live 7 years for each year of human life

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Parametric Models for Censored Data

.....

- Commonly used parametric models
 - Exponential:
 - Constant hazard independent of past
 - Weibull:
 - Theoretical derivation: First failure in a series of components (weakest link in a chain)
 - Log hazard is linear
 - Exponential is special case
 - Only accelerated failure time model that is also proportional hazards

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Parametric Models for Censored Data

.....

- Commonly used parametric models (cont.)
 - Gamma:
 - Theoretical derivation: Final failure in parallel components
 - Exponential is special case
 - Lognormal
 - Many other generalizations

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Caveats

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Choice of Summary Measures

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Parametric Models

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- All of the parametric models will be sensitive to violation of the distributional assumptions
 - Because these models assume constant ratio of all quantiles, we do not have robustness to other distributions in any particular model (including lognormal)
 - (We will discuss these models with regression next quarter)

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Semiparametric Models

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- We do know how to use the proportional hazards model, even when the hazard ratio is not constant
 - However, you need to be careful– it may not estimate anything you care about

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Hypothetical Example: Setting

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- Consider survival with a particular treatment used in renal dialysis patients
- Extract data from registry of dialysis patients
- To ensure quality, only use data after 1995
 - Incident cases in 1995: Follow-up 1995 – 2002 (8 yrs)
 - Prevalent cases in 1995: Data from 1995 - 2002
 - Incident in 1994: Information about 2nd – 9th year
 - Incident in 1993: Information about 3rd – 10th year
 - ...
 - Incident in 1988: Information about 8th – 15th year

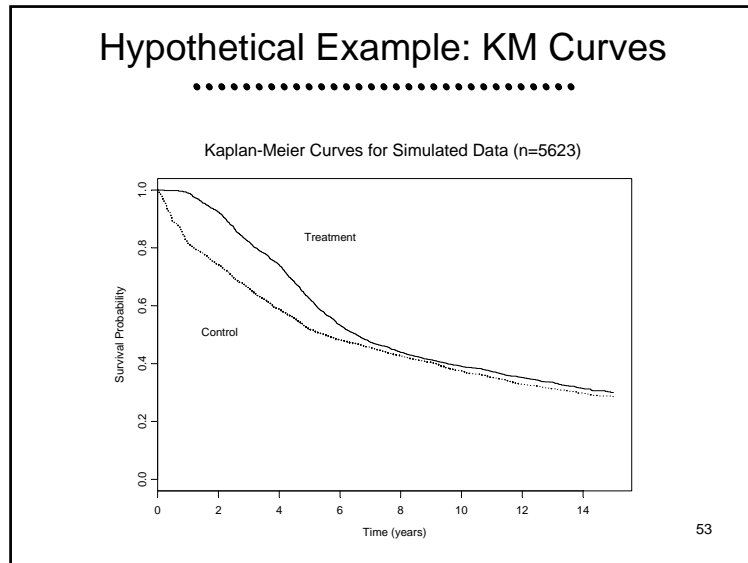
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Hypothetical Example: Analysis

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- Choice of summary measure
 - Survival at fixed point in time
 - Median, other quantiles
 - Mean (or restricted mean)
 - Hazard ratio (or weighted average of hazard ratio over time)
- Choice of methods
 - Parametric, semiparametric, nonparametric

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Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?

.....

Proportional hazards analysis estimates a **Treatment** : **Control** hazard ratio of

A: 2.07 (logrank P = .0018)
 B: 1.13 (logrank P = .0018)
 C: 0.87 (logrank P = .0018)
 D: 0.48 (logrank P = .0018)

- Lifelines:
 - 50-50? Ask the audience? Call a friend?

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Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?

.....

Proportional hazards analysis estimates a **Treatment** : **Control** hazard ratio of

B: 1.13 (logrank P = .0018)
 C: 0.87 (logrank P = .0018)

- Lifelines:
 - 50-50? Ask the audience? Call a friend?

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