

The flight time from Tokyo to Hong Kong is a normal random variable with a mean of 4 hours and a standard deviation of half an hour. The flight is cancelled with probability 10%. Given that the flight hasn't arrived in 5 hours what is the probability it was cancelled?

Here are some values of the CDF for a Normal(0, 1) random variable N :

n :	-3	-2	-1	0
$P(N \leq n)$:	0.0013	0.0228	0.1587	0.5

Solution: Let T be the waiting time for the flight and C be the event it was cancelled. The probability that $T > 5$ given C^c (not cancelled) is the probability that a normal random variable exceeds two standard deviations above its mean, that is $P(N > 2) = P(N < -2) \approx 0.0228$. By Bayes' rule

$$P(C|T > 5) = \frac{P(T > 5|C) P(C)}{P(T > 5|C) P(C) + P(T > 5|C^c) P(C^c)} \approx \frac{1 \cdot 0.1}{1 \cdot 0.1 + 0.0228 \cdot 0.9} \approx 0.830.$$