

Join the fight against Cancer

Time to focus on Cancer prevention

4th February is World Cancer Day and we want to offer guidance on how to prevent cancer from developing. It's a chance to promote access to cancer diagnosis, treatment and healthcare for all.



1 in 3 people will be diagnosed with cancer in their lifetime!



Smoking causes almost 80% of lung cancer cases.²



The most common cancers are breast, lung, colon and rectum and prostate cancers.³



Cervical Cancer

Nearly 600,000 new cervical cancer cases are diagnosed every year⁴ however, it's one of the most highly preventable and curable forms of cancer when detected early. A preventative cervical screening is the best way to catch abnormalities and pre-cancerous cells and women over 30 should have these regularly. If you experience any abnormal bleeding, pelvic pain or pain during or after intercourse you should contact your doctor.

Signs & symptoms of cancers

Detecting cancer early is one of the most powerful ways we can help to save lives. There are so many different types of cancers and the symptoms can vary greatly but here are some key signs that you should get checked by a medical professional.

- **Unusual lumps or swelling** – they are often painless and may increase in size
- **Coughing, breathlessness or difficulty swallowing** – be aware of breathlessness, difficulty swallowing or persistent coughing episodes
- **Changes in bowel habit** – such as constipation and diarrhoea and/or any bleeding
- **Unexpected bleeding** – includes bleeding found in stools or urine, from the vagina or anal passage as well as any that is coughed up
- **Unexplained weight loss** – a large amount of unexplained weight loss over a couple of months
- **Fatigue** – which shows itself as a severe lack of energy and if it's due to cancer, individuals normally also have other symptoms
- **Pain or ache** – ongoing pain or any pain that comes and goes that is unexplained
- **New mole or changes to a mole** – look for changes in size, shape, or colour and texture



Taking preventative measures

- Lifestyle choices have a proven effect on preventing cancer, and we've gathered our top tips here:
- **Eat healthy food** - focus on eating plenty of fruits and vegetables, and avoid overly processed foods as much as possible.
- **Do not smoke** - smoking is the leading cause of lung cancer
- **Moderate your alcohol intake** - your risk of various cancers, including breast, colon, and liver, increases with the amount of alcohol you drink.
- **Stay physically active** - To maximise your health benefits, aim to get at least 150 minutes of moderate activity a week
- **Protect yourself from harmful sunlight** - wear sunscreen and don't overuse tanning beds
- **Go for cancer screenings** - cancer screening, such as mammography (breast cancer) or a Pap smear (cervical cancer), helps detect unusual changes in the body at an early stage, which makes treatment more effective. Screening saves lives and it's crucial to attend cancer screens where appropriate

Initiatives like Cancer Prevention Month let us work together to raise awareness, encourage education, promote research, and support the fight against cancer.

1. American Cancer Society, <https://www.cancer.org/>.
2. Tobacco and Cancer. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/cancer/tobacco/>.
3. World Health Organisation, Cancer <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/cancer>
4. World Cancer day, <https://www.worldcancerday.org/spotlight-cervical-cancer>



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