

## National Minority Cancer Awareness



### **What Is National Minority Cancer Awareness Week?**

The American Cancer Society (ACS) and National Cancer Institute (NCI) highlight a week in April due to high cancer rates and deaths for some ethnic and minority groups living in the United States. The ACS and NCI are working to find and correct the reasons for this unequal cancer burden among the minority community. Raising awareness of the problem in these communities is one step that can save lives.

### **What Are the Key Statistics about Cancer in Minorities?**

- African Americans have the highest death rate and shortest survival of any racial and ethnic group in the US for most cancers.
- African American women are less likely to develop breast cancer, but are more likely to die from the disease if they develop it.
- African-American men have almost twice the rate of getting and dying from prostate cancer as white men.
- Hispanics have a higher rate of cancer linked with infection such as uterine, cervix, liver, and stomach.

### **Why are Minorities at Risk for Cancer?**

Certain groups in the United States are not doing as well as others when it comes to preventing and surviving cancer. Many such disparities are apparent among certain minority populations such as African Americans and Hispanics. The reasons why cancer adversely affects these groups are largely related to issues such as poverty, access to health care, and other socioeconomic factors..

## Can Cancer Be Found Early?

You can prevent some cancers by detecting abnormal cells before they become cancer cells. Often, abnormal cells can be discovered through a cancer screening. Types of cancer screenings include an exam by your healthcare team or a test that detects abnormal cells. A physical exam may help detect certain types of cancers at an early stage. Below are some examples of screening exams or tests:

Screening Exam or Test	Cancer Detected
Physical exam	Examples of cancers include skin, oral, lymphomas, breast, liver, colon, rectal, prostate, endometrial and ovarian
Mammography	Breast
PAP smear	Cervical
PSA (Prostate Specific Antigen)	Prostate
Colonoscopy or Sigmoidoscopy	Rectal and colon cancer
Stool for Occult Blood	Rectal and colon cancer

## Can Cancer Be Prevented?

Researchers believe keeping a healthy lifestyle may prevent many cancers. A healthy lifestyle includes maintaining a healthy weight, staying physically active, managing stress, avoiding heavy or excess alcohol, and not smoking. Avoiding exposure to cancer causing agents such as certain chemicals, lead, asbestos, and sun exposure that results in sunburns can also help prevent cancer.

### Diet and Health Guidelines for Cancer Prevention

- Choose a diet rich in a variety of plant-based foods.
- Eat plenty of vegetables and fruits.
- Maintain a healthy weight and be physically active.
- Limit alcohol consumption, if at all.
- Select foods low in fat and salt.
- Prepare and store food safely.
- Do not use tobacco in any form.

### Smoking

Studies show that tobacco products in any form (for example cigarettes and chewing tobacco) are a major cause of lung and head and neck cancer. Avoiding tobacco and quitting smoking are the two major steps that can be taken to prevent these cancers. The earlier you start using tobacco, the greater your risk for developing cancer and other health problems.

### **Protection from the Damaging Rays of the Sun**

Limiting sun exposure to the damaging UV radiation of the sun is the best way to prevent skin cancer.

- The sun is strongest between 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., which increases your exposure to UV radiation.
- Wear protective clothing—cover up with a wide-brimmed hat, long-sleeved shirts and pants to ensure the sun won't penetrate.
- Wear sunglasses.
- Use sunscreen. The American Cancer Society recommends that you use a sunscreen with a sun protective factor (SPF) of 30 or higher. Apply the sunscreen to any part of the body that is not protected by clothing. It is important to remember that the sunscreen must be reapplied throughout the day in order to be effective.
- Beware of cloudy days. You can get burned just as easily on a cloudy day as a sunny day.
- Do not use sunlamps or tanning salons.

### **Cancer Prevention Trials at Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey**

If you would like further information about clinical trials for preventing cancer, please call Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey's Office of Human Research Services at 732-235-8675. For additional information about nationwide cancer prevention trials, you can call the National Cancer Institute at 1-800-4 CANCEER or visit their website at [www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov).

## Where Can I Find Further Information?

Resource and Learning Center

732-235-9639

[www.cinj.org/rlc](http://www.cinj.org/rlc)

Provides reliable, relevant and current information about all aspects of cancer.

Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ)

<http://www.ahrq.gov/patients-consumers/index.html>

The American Cancer Society

1-800-ACS-2345

[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

American Institute for Cancer Research

1-800-843-8114

[www.aicr.org](http://www.aicr.org)

MedlinePlus

[www.medlineplus.gov](http://www.medlineplus.gov)

National Cancer Institute

1-800-4-CANCER

[www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov)

National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

800-232-4636

<http://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/index.htm>

National Institute of Health

301-496-4000

[www.nih.gov](http://www.nih.gov)

NJ Cancer Education and Early Detection Prevention and Health Promotion (NJCEED)

1-800-328-3838

<http://www.nj.gov/health/ces/public/resources/njceed.shtml>



RLC website QR code. Scan with smartphone / device.