

## April Is Cancer Control Month



Estimated number of new cancer cases for 2024, excluding basal cell and squamous cell skin cancers and in situ carcinoma except urinary bladder. Estimates are not available for Puerto Rico.

**Note:** Incidence counts are model-based projections and should be interpreted with caution. State estimates may not equal US total due to rounding.

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### What Is Cancer Control Month?

Cancer control month highlights advances in fighting cancer. This includes prevention, early detection, and treatment of cancer. One way to control cancer is to find cancer cells and get rid of them. Cancer screenings can help find cancer early. The earlier the cancer is found, the better the prognosis.

### What are the Key Statistics about Cancer?

- After heart disease, cancer is the second leading cause of death in the United States.
- About 2 million new cancer cases are expected to be diagnosed in 2024.
- Over a lifetime, about 42 out of 100 men and 40 out of 100 women will develop cancer.
- Cancer deaths have been on the decline since the early 1990's.
- The American Cancer Society estimates that at least 18% of all cancers in the US are related to being overweight or obese, physical inactivity, excess alcohol consumption and/or poor nutrition.

## **Who's at Risk?**

While everyone is at risk for cancer, some people are at greater risk than others. Age is the greatest risk factor for cancer with 88% of cancers diagnosed at 50 years of age or older. People who use tobacco, drink heavily, are physically inactive, eat a poor diet, have excess body weight, are regularly exposed to carcinogens (cancer causing agents) in their occupation, or have prolonged and unprotected exposure to sunlight are all at increased risk for certain cancers.

Everyone should follow cancer prevention and screening guidelines. Those at highest risk for specific cancers should pay close attention to symptoms and screening recommendations and should seek prompt medical attention if they occur. The latest screening guidelines recommended by the American Cancer Society can be found at: <https://www.cancer.org/healthy/find-cancer-early/cancer-screening-guidelines/american-cancer-society-guidelines-for-the-early-detection-of-cancer.html>.

## **Can Cancer Be Found Early or Controlled?**

Scientific or medical discoveries have a major impact on controlling cancer. Some examples of controlling cancer are:

### **Genetic Testing**

Researchers have found changes (mutations) in genes may cause cancer. Some genetic changes may increase a person's chance of getting cancer. People who are concerned about cancer in their family should talk to their healthcare provider. The healthcare provider may send them to a cancer genetics specialist. People with a strong family history of cancer may be recommended to have a blood test. These tests may show if they have inherited any of these genetic changes. Genetic counseling helps people decide if testing is right for them as well as understand and deal with the results.

Genetic counseling is available through The Hereditary Oncology Prevention and Evaluation (HOPE) program at Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey. Please call 732-235-7110 to schedule an appointment or for more information about the program.

### **Gene Therapy**

Genes are genetic material that control the development of one or more traits and is the basic unit by which genetic information is passed from parent to offspring. Cells normally have genes that help prevent cancer from developing. Gene therapy is a medicine that introduces genetic material into a person's DNA to replace faulty or missing genetic material. It may be possible to treat cancer by placing a healthy gene into the cancer cells.

### **Vaccines**

Vaccines help the immune system to prevent or fight disease. Cancer vaccines can stop or prevent certain cancers.

### **Chemopreventive Agents**

Chemopreventive agents are given to prevent cancer. They can act alone or with other medicines to reduce the risk of certain cancers.

### **Early Detection**

New and more accurate cancer screening methods allow earlier detection of some precancerous lesions and early-stage cancers. This helps physicians treat people before the disease progresses.

### **Lifestyle Changes**

New findings about lifestyle changes, especially concerning diet, nutrition, and physical activity, may prevent some cancers.

**Chemotherapy**

Clinical trials are in progress to test new chemotherapy drugs or combinations. Other studies are testing new ways to combine proven drugs to make them even more effective. These medicines can help control, cure, or prevent the return of cancer once it has developed.

**Immunotherapy**

New treatments have been developed that work with the immune system. This type of treatment can help fight or control cancer. You may also hear this referred to as biological therapy, biotherapy, or biological response modifier (BRM) therapy.

**Antiangiogenesis Agents**

Tumors cannot grow without a blood supply. Antiangiogenesis therapy is the use of drugs or other substances to stop cancerous tumors from developing new blood vessels.

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

If you would like information about clinical trials for preventing cancer, please call Rutgers Cancer Institute of New Jersey's Office of Human Research Services at 732-235-7356. 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)

(609) 292-8540

[www.nj.gov/health/ces/public/resources/njceed.shtml](http://www.nj.gov/health/ces/public/resources/njceed.shtml)



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