

**WORLD
CANCER
DAY4FEB**

WE CAN



PREVENT CANCER

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WE CAN PREVENT CANCER



Changes in the way we live means that more and more people around the world are exposed to cancer risk factors like smoking, poor diet, and sedentary lifestyles. Educating and informing individuals and communities about the links between lifestyle and cancer risk is the first step in effective cancer prevention.

Smoking is still the biggest cancer risk factor. Tobacco use accounts for five million deaths every year, or 22% of all cancer deaths^{1,2}. Reducing the rates of tobacco use will significantly decrease the global burden of a large number of cancers, including of the lung, oral cavity, larynx, pharynx, oesophageal, pancreas, bladder, kidney, cervix and stomach, and acute myeloid leukaemia.

Consuming alcohol is linked to an increased risk of six cancers. There is now strong evidence that consuming alcoholic drinks increases the risk of seven cancers: mouth, pharynx, larynx, oesophageal, liver, breast³, and pancreas⁴.

The rising levels of obesity are of concern in many countries around the world. Overweight and obesity are strongly linked with an increased risk of bowel, breast, uterine, ovarian, pancreatic, oesophagus, kidney, and gallbladder cancers later in life⁵. Yet, about a third of common cancers can be prevented through a healthy diet, maintaining a healthy weight and being physically active⁶. Specifically, the World Cancer Research Fund International estimates that for the 13 most common cancers, about 31% of cases in the United States are preventable through a healthy diet, being physically active and maintaining a healthy weight. The estimates for other countries are 32% for the UK, 25% for Brazil and 24% for China⁷.

Equipping individuals and communities with the latest knowledge of the links between lifestyle and cancer can empower people to adopt healthy choices. Individuals and communities need to be informed that more than a third of cancers are preventable through adopting healthy behaviours.

This factsheet is aimed at



Healthcare professionals



Workplaces



Policy makers



Schools



Cities



Sport & leisure groups

1. WHO. (2012). Global Report: Mortality attributable to tobacco 2012. Geneva: World Health Organization.
2. Tobacco Atlas 2015
3. WHO. (2011). Global status report on alcohol and health. Geneva: World Health Organization
4. World Cancer Research Fund / American Institute for Cancer Research. Continuous Update Project (2012) Pancreatic Cancer. <http://www.wcrf.org/sites/default/files/Pancreatic-Cancer-2012-Report.pdf>
5. World Cancer Research Fund / American Institute for Cancer Research. Continuous Update Project Report. <http://www.dietandcancerreport.org/cup/index.php>.

6. World Cancer Research Fund International. Link between lifestyle and cancer risk. <http://www.wcrf.org/int/link-between-lifestyle-cancer-risk>
7. World Cancer Research Fund International. <http://www.wcrf.org/int/cancer-facts-figures/preventability-estimates/cancer-preventability-estimates-diet-nutrition> and http://www.wcrf.org/int/policy/nourishing-framework?utm_source=update&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=NOURISHINGJuly