

MEDIA RELEASE FROM THE CANCER ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AFRICA (CANSA)

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Attention: News Editor
For Immediate Release

World Cancer Day - Prioritise Your Health

On World Cancer Day, 4 February, the Cancer Association of South Africa (CANSA) and Union for International Cancer Control (UICC) encourages people to set and achieve personal goals enabling them to lower cancer risk and for cancer patients to optimise health, especially in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic. The global response to the COVID-19 pandemic has been all consuming, however, cancer control needs to remain a priority

Elize Joubert, CANSA CEO says, “Cancer continues to claim unnecessary lives. It’s important that despite the COVID-19 pandemic we do not lose sight of the needs of cancer patients, helping them [to live a balanced lifestyle](#) to safeguard their health and of the importance to continue raising awareness of the [signs of cancer](#), early detection through [screening](#) and [educating to lower cancer risk](#). We encourage cancer patients currently in treatment and others living with cancer to stay informed about COVID-19. Know what can be done to lower the risk for the virus, and on what to do if they should contract it. (<https://cansa.org.za/covid-19-what-cancer-patients-should-know/>).

For the past two years, World Cancer Day supporters around the world have been sharing their ‘I Am and I Will’ commitments – pledging bold and brave actions to reduce the impact of cancer.

Joubert puts out the challenge, “In 2021, CANSA celebrates a significant milestone of its 90th anniversary of educating and reducing the cancer risk and showing enduring support and care. We’re grateful that we are still making a difference in the lives of those affected by cancer. As part of World Cancer day, we challenge individuals, families, companies, schools, service organisations, to partner and work with CANSA to raise awareness of our vital services so that we can continue helping to build a world without cancer. And to let all cancer patients know that they are not alone.”

What You Can Do - 21 Days to Impact Challenge

“If you’re not sure where to start, sign up for the [World Cancer Day ‘21 Days to Impact Challenge’](#). It takes the proverbial 21 days to create a positive habit. So, for 2021, whether you’re committing to improving your personal health and those of your loved ones, supporting someone you love with cancer, educating yourself about cancer, speaking out against cancer or making history by helping to eliminate cervical cancer, sign up to one of the five challenges to receive daily inspiration and practical guidance,” stated Joubert.

Visit <https://www.worldcancerday.org/21DayChallenge> and choose a challenge. Sign up for the challenge. Receive an email every day with a new activity, inspiration, lesson or prompt. Get closer to fulfilling your ‘I Am and I Will’ commitment and share on social media using the hashtags #WorldCancerDay #IAmAndIWill #CANSA90

- Know your body – be aware of changes and do regular self-examinations ([skin](#), [breast](#) or [testicular](#)). Get to know the [signs of cancer](#) and symptoms.
- Vaccinate against HPV and Hepatitis B viruses that may lead to cancer.
- Do regular cancer screening and make an appointment at your local [CANSA Care Centre for:](#) Clinical breast examinations and Pap smears (cervical cancer screening test for early diagnosis); Prostate Specific Antigen (blood tests to assist with detecting prostate abnormalities); FotoFinder (skin examinations) and Faecal occult Blood Home-test kit (for early detection of colorectal cancer).
- Eat smart – find information on [CANSA website](#).
- Take CANSA's online [Lifestyle Risk Assessment Tool](#) that that can help identify health risks that you need to address –
- [Keep moving](#) – staying active is essential, get off to a great start by participating in your local Gijima For CANSA, CANSA Active events or support the [World Cancer Day Solidarity Challenge](#), a global virtual cycling event. (<https://youtu.be/A6fAQdpMb20> - see message of support from Xylon Van Eyck, South African cyclist, triathlete and cancer survivor) sends message of support .
- Be [SunSmart](#)
- Avoid carcinogens (cancer-causing agents) – [avoid tobacco](#), [alcohol](#) and [environmental carcinogens](#).
- Support a cancer patient by offering practical support or referring them to CANSA - tell them about CANSA's [Tele Counselling service](#), [iSurvivor](#), [Metastatic Breast Cancer email support programme](#), [pain management guides](#) and [Facebook support groups](#).

Ways to help CANSA

- Be a cancer advocate – speak against cancer stigma and myths and speak up for patient and caregiver rights or raise [general awareness of cancer](#) and how to [lower cancer risk](#).
- Volunteer – sign up to be a CANSA Volunteer [online](#) to help with patients, health awareness or fundraising activities.
- Donate - Make an online donation via cansa.org.za (look for the red heart DONATE button) <https://cansa.org.za/cansas-wish-list/> or become an online champion and raise funds online.

(For more information, please contact Lucy Balona, Head: Marketing and Communication at CANSA at email lbalona@cansa.org.za. Call 011 616 7662 or mobile 082 459 5230.)

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Visit www.cansa.org.za or contact the nearest [CANSA Care Centre](#), call CANSA toll-free 0800 22 66 22 or email: info@cansa.org.za. In addition to [online resources and Facebook support groups](#), CANSA offers multi-lingual support on WhatsApp: 072 197 9305 for English and Afrikaans and 071 867 3530 for isiXhosa, isiZulu, siSwati, Sesotho and Setswana and free Tele Counselling per appointment on 0800 22 66 22 in English, Afrikaans, isiXhosa, isiZulu, siSwati, Sesotho and Setswana. Follow CANSA on Facebook: [CANSA The Cancer Association of South Africa](#), Twitter: [@CANSA](#) (<http://www.twitter.com/CANSA>), Instagram [@cancerassociationofsouthafrica](#), [LinkedIn](#) and [Pinterest](#)

ABOUT CANSA (editor's notes)

CANSA offers a unique integrated service to the public and to all people affected by cancer. CANSA is a leading role-player in cancer research and the scientific findings and knowledge gained from our research are used to realign our health programmes, as well as strengthen our watchdog role to the greater benefit of the public. Our health programmes comprise health and education campaigns; CANSA Care Centres that offer a wide range of care and support services to those affected by cancer; stoma and other clinical support and organisational management; medical equipment hire, as well as a toll-free line to offer information and support. We offer a Tele Counselling service in seven languages free of charge and we also supply patient care and support in the form of 11 CANSA Care Homes in the main metropolitan areas for out-of-town cancer patients and CANSA-TLC lodging for parents and guardians of children undergoing cancer treatment.