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Reduce your risk of cancer and be **bodyaware**

Some signs and symptoms to look for:

- Unexplained weight loss or tiredness
- Increasingly out of breath
- A cough or croaky voice that lasts longer than 3 weeks
- Blood in sputum
- Unexplained persistent pain or ache
- A change in the size, shape, colour of a mole
- Sickness
- Difficulty in swallowing/indigestion
- An ulcer/soreness in the mouth/tongue lasting longer than 3 weeks
- Unexplained lump/swelling
- A change to bowel motions that lasts longer than 6 weeks
- Blood in your bowel motions
- Blood in your urine
- Problems passing urine
- Persistent bloatedness, or dragging feeling in the lower abdomen
- Unusual changes to the breast e.g. a lump, pain/discomfort, veins becoming more visible, changes in size/shape, nipple discharge, rash.

Be aware of your body and always get symptoms checked by a doctor. **Early detection saves lives.**



If you have any concerns about cancer you can talk to one of our specialist nurses on the Cancer Focus NI free information and support NurseLine

0800 783 3339

Monday to Friday 9am - 1pm
Calls are free from a landline
nurseline@cancerfocusni.org

Cancer Focus Northern Ireland
40-44 Eglantine Avenue
Belfast BT9 6DX

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Charity No: NIC 101307

Updated August 2018

Take control of your health and be **wellaware**

Cancer Awareness for Women



Every year, around 6,000 women develop cancer in Northern Ireland. Approximately 1,600 of these cases are the less serious, non-malignant skin cancer. Remember that over half of all cancers can be prevented through a healthier lifestyle.

No matter what age you are you can start making lifestyle changes that can reduce your risk of cancer. In addition to this, most cancers are much more treatable if diagnosed early.

The 3 most common cancers in women

Breast

Over 1,200 women develop breast cancer each year. It is important that all women are breast aware. Examine your breasts regularly to know what they feel like. If you notice a change tell your doctor. If you are aged between 50 and 70 you should attend screening when invited. If you are over 70 you are still at risk of breast cancer and can book an appointment at your local breast screening unit. If you notice any unusual changes in you breast please see your GP

Bowel

Over 500 women are diagnosed each year. If you are aged between 60 and 74 use the bowel testing kit when it is sent to your home as part of the bowel screening programme.

Lung

Approximately 500 women develop lung cancer each year. Tobacco is the major cause of lung cancer. It's never too late to stop smoking.

Some simple tips

Healthy weight

Keeping to a healthy weight is one of the most important things you can do to lower your risk of cancer.



Healthy diet

- Eat at least 5 portions of fruit and vegetables every day - these can be fresh, frozen, canned, cooked or raw
- Eat more fibre - switch to brown bread, wholemeal pasta, brown rice rather than white
- High salt intake is linked to stomach cancer so aim for less than 6g per day
- Eat less red meat (beef, pork, lamb) and less processed meat such as sausages, bacon and ham
- Cut back on foods high in fat and sugar



Exercise

Exercise lowers your risk of cancer and helps you to enjoy life. Try to keep active every day. Aim for at least 30 minutes every day. Even housework and gardening count as forms of exercise. Any amount of exercise is better than none at all.

Care in the Sun

Even in Northern Ireland you can get skin cancer from the sun.

Follow this simple advice:

- Wear a T-shirt and hat
- Stay in the shade between 11am and 3pm
- Use sunscreen (SPF15+, 4 star rating+)
- Keep an eye on moles - if you notice any change in shape, colour, size or feeling, tell your doctor



Alcohol

- If you drink alcohol of any type, limit your intake. Not drinking alcohol is better for cancer prevention.

Smoking

The best thing you can do for your health is to stop smoking.

Top tips for stopping:

- Pick a quit day and stick to it
- Get support, one-to-one or group
- Use stop smoking aids e.g. gum, patches, tablets
- Make a list of the reasons why you should stop smoking
- Visit www.want2stop.info

Chemicals (Household & Workplace)

Always read and practice health and safety guidelines. Some chemicals may cause cancer if you breathe them in or get them on your skin.



Get checked out

If you experience any of the symptoms listed in this leaflet, or if you have any health concern, make an appointment to see your doctor.

Having any of these symptoms doesn't mean you have cancer. There are lots of reasons for coughs, pains, lumps, etc. But they might be clues to cancer and the sooner treatment is started the more successful it is likely to be.

Before your appointment you might find it useful to use the space provided to write down how you are feeling. You can then bring this leaflet to your appointment to help you to take your time and remember everything you want to say.

If after a few weeks your symptoms have not improved then make another appointment - maybe even with a different doctor for a second opinion.



You can also phone our free Nurse Line

0800 783 3339
for further help and advice