

Early detection, early detection, early detection



Three important things to know about cancer

Early detection, early detection, early detection. Why say it three times? Because if you have to choose only one thing to remember from this cancer awareness campaign, it's this: *early detection can save your life.*

Before we go on, we want to reinforce that changes in your lifestyle can reduce your chances of even developing colon, skin and breast cancer. But even if you follow all of these lifestyle suggestions, regular screenings are vital.

Here are some uplifting statistics. They demonstrate how incredibly important early detection is to your chances for successful treatment:

- The five-year relative survival rate for women with stage 0 or stage I breast cancer is close to 100 percent.¹
- When colon cancer is found early, before it has spread, the five-year relative survival rate is 91 percent.²
- The five-year survival rate for people whose melanoma is detected and treated before it spreads to the lymph nodes is 99 percent.³

Common fears and misconceptions

You have enormous power to fight cancer. We'd like to help you shed your fears and recognize the power you have over cancer.

- Does the word "cancer" make you uncomfortable?
- If someone starts to talk about cancer, would you prefer to change the subject?
- If there was a chance you had cancer, would you want to know?
- If your healthcare provider wanted you to take a test for cancer, would you take it?
- Do you avoid tests for cancer because you've heard terrible things about the tests?
- Do you avoid tests for cancer because you've heard or think they're embarrassing?
- Are you afraid that a diagnosis of cancer — or even discussing cancer — could jeopardize your job? Or change the way co-workers treat you?
- Do you avoid tests because you don't want to take time off from work?

If you ignore cancer, it can grow and spread. Once it spreads, treatment options become limited and the chances for your recovery may be greatly reduced.

Cancer loves your fear

Try this exercise

Take every worry you have about cancer and reframe it into something proactive and powerful. You can even use the common fears and misconceptions on the last page as a starting point. For example:

- “I want to know more about cancer. It’s not catching me by surprise and destroying my life!”
- “I’m afraid of tests, but I’ll find out more about them. Going through months of cancer treatment is a lot worse than one uncomfortable screening test.”

Write your answer here:

Sources:

1. American Cancer Society. Survival Rates for Breast Cancer, March 1, 2022. Available from www.cancer.org.
2. American Cancer Society. Survival Rates for Colorectal Cancer, March 1, 2022. Available from www.cancer.org.
3. American Cancer Society. Survival Rates for Melanoma Skin Cancer, March 1, 2022. Available from www.cancer.org.

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