30-40% of cancers could be prevented by eating a balanced diet, being physically active and keeping at a healthy body weight.
Cancer isn’t an inevitable disease. There are things we can do today that can help reduce our risk in the future.
◆ cut down on fat

Eating too much fat, especially saturated fat, can put you at risk of serious health problems, including cancer and heart disease. If you're a big fan of fast food, fry ups, pies and pastries then you're probably consuming more fat than you should be. Takeaways and other processed foods such as sausage rolls, cakes and biscuits, are not only loaded with calories but also contain saturated and trans fats, the worst types of fat in terms of our health. As a rough guide, an average man weighing a healthy body weight for his height should aim for no more than 95g of total fat each day, including no more than 30g of saturated fat. By law, food labels must state the amount and type of fat contained in a product, so keep an eye out when buying packaged food. Unsaturated fats are much better for us – try unsalted nuts, seeds, avocado and olive oil, as these are all good sources. But don't over indulge in any high fat foods as eating too many can add pounds.

◆ reduce your intake of salt

It's not just table salt or adding salt to cooking that you have to be aware of – 75 per cent of the salt we eat is 'hidden' in our food. If you eat a lot of pre-packed foods like sandwiches, soups or ready meals then the chances are that you're eating too much salt. In the UK, we consume twice as much salt as the recommended 6g each day. And most of the time, we don't even know we're eating it. It's not just savoury foods that contain salt – sweet foods like biscuits, and some breakfast cereals, also contain high amounts of salt. To cut down on salt, try to limit the amount of convenience food you eat. By cooking your own meals, and making sure you include plenty of fruit and vegetables and other healthy plant foods, you can take charge of the amount of salt in your diet.
diagnostic chart – detecting problems

Please note: having any of the symptoms described below doesn't mean that you have cancer, but it's also a good idea to find out about the types of cancer (if any) that run in your family, and to

1 Lung cancer is diagnosed in more than 23,000 men each year. Smoking is the cause of 90 per cent of lung cancers, so if you do smoke, stop now. A healthy diet with plenty of fruit and vegetables and regular exercise have been linked to a reduced risk of this disease. High fat foods and alcohol may increase the risk of lung cancer.

What to look out for: chronic cough; blood in your saliva; increasing mucus; fever; chest pain; weight loss.

2 Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men. The disease is most prevalent in men aged over 65. There is ongoing research into lycopene (an antioxidant found in tomatoes), selenium (a mineral found in Brazil nuts, fish, seafood, whole grains and soy beans) and vitamin E to see if these nutrients play a positive role in helping to prevent this disease. The PSA (prostate specific antigen) blood test is sometimes used to detect prostate cancer, but is not appropriate in all cases. Please speak to your GP for more advice.

What to look out for: frequent urination, especially at night; urine not flowing freely; blood in your urine; pain in your lower back when urinating; having the feeling that your bladder has not completely emptied.
and stopping them in their tracks

It's best to visit your GP and get them checked out anyway. Speak to your GP if you are at all concerned.

3 **Bowel cancer** is strongly linked with a poor diet. Around 19,000 men are diagnosed with the disease each year, but eating plenty of healthy foods like vegetables, and cutting back on red meat and alcohol may help reduce your risk. Staying a healthy weight and being physically active are also thought to help prevent this disease.

**What to look out for:** a persistent change in bowel habits (particularly when combined with bleeding); abdominal pains; weight loss; unexplained fatigue or vomiting. A national screening programme for men and women will be in place from April 2006. Speak to your GP for more information.

4 **Testicular cancer** affects around 2,000 men each year. Unlike the majority of cancers, it is most common in younger men aged between 15 and 44. But it's wise to check yourself regularly whatever your age. Know what's normal for you and if you notice anything strange, visit your GP.

**What to look out for:** a swelling or hard lump in one of your testicles; a heavy feeling in one or both of your testicles; a sudden filling of your scrotum (sac) with fluid. If in doubt - get it checked out!