PREVENTING CANCER
WHAT I CAN DO:
follow the European Code

Your doctor will advise you.

Europe against cancer
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CANCER TOUCHES MANY LIVES
Cancer is a disease which affects 1 in 3 people in this country at some stage in their lives, usually when they are over 60 years of age. The good news is that at least 2 out of 3 cancer-related deaths are believed to be preventable.

WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT CANCER INCREASES ON AN ALMOST DAILY BASIS
There are nearly 200 different types of cancer. Today many of them may be cured if they are detected early. Yet although there is continuous progress in research and improvement in treatments, some types of cancer are still gaining ground throughout Europe. There are ways that you can reduce your risk.

STAY HEALTHY - ACT PROMPTLY
In many cases, the symptoms of cancer don't show until well after the disease has taken hold. And even though the human body has its own natural defence mechanisms, some of the things we do can increase our risk. Each of us can work to improve our own lifestyle. It's never too late to start. A number of cancers are curable if they are detected in their early stages. So if you are concerned about any changes or signs in your body, see your doctor without delay.

If every European citizen was committed to following the guidelines set out in the European Code against Cancer, potentially 125,000 cancer deaths could be avoided each year.

HOW TO REDUCE YOUR RISKS

Make a healthier lifestyle your goal. Do not smoke. If you drink alcohol, do so in moderation. Eat a balanced diet including plenty of fruit and vegetables. Eat less fatty foods. Take plenty of exercise. Protect yourself from the sun.

TAKE PROMPT ACTION

While certain problems may not seem serious, they may prove to be warning signs for the early stages of cancer. Such signs include a change in the appearance of a mole, a sore that won't heal or the appearance of a lump.

Some seemingly harmless symptoms may be telltale signs for your doctor, such as persistent coughing or hoarseness, prolonged constipation or diarrhoea, or unexplained weight loss.

If in any doubt, be sure to see your doctor without delay. He or she is familiar with the warning signs of cancer, and will know what to do.

These improvements will help you reduce your chance of developing cancer and will improve other aspects of your health. A healthy lifestyle also provides the benefit of reducing your risk of heart disease, lung disease and premature ageing of the skin.

QUIZ ANSWERS


FURTHER CONTACTS

Health Education Authority
Hamilton House, Mabledon Place, London WC1H 9TX. Tel: 0171 383 3833.

Health Education Board for Scotland
Woodburn House, Canaan Lane, Edinburgh EH10 4SG. Tel: 0131 447 8044.

Health Promotion Wales
Hymnlon, Tj Garon Avenue, Uphillen, Cardiff CF4 5DZ. Tel: 01222 752222.

Health Promotion Agency for Northern Ireland
18 Ormeau Avenue, Belfast BT2 8HS. Tel: 01232 311611.
EUROPEAN CODE AGAINST CANCER

Certain cancers may be avoided and general health improved if you adopt a healthier lifestyle.

1. Do not smoke. Smokers, stop as quickly as possible and do not smoke in the presence of others. If you do not smoke, do not try it.

2. If you drink alcohol, whether beer, wine or spirits, moderate your consumption.

3. Increase your daily intake of vegetables and fresh fruit. Eat cereals with a high fibre content frequently.

4. Avoid becoming overweight, increase physical activity and limit intake of fatty foods.

5. Avoid excessive exposure to the sun and avoid sunburn especially in children.

6. Apply strictly regulations aimed at preventing any exposure to known cancer causing substances. Follow all health and safety instructions on substances which may cause cancer.

More cancers may be cured if detected early.

7. See your doctor if you notice a lump, a sore which does not heal (including in the mouth), a mole which changes in shape, size or colour, or any abnormal bleeding.

8. See your doctor if you have persistent problems, such as a persistent cough, persistent hoarseness, a change in bowel or urinary habits or an unexplained weight loss.

For women.

9. Have a cervical smear regularly. Participate in organised screening programmes for cervical cancer.

10. Check your breasts regularly. Participate in organised mammographic screening programmes if you are over 50.

PREVENTING CANCER
WHAT I CAN DO
True/False

1. «If I eat lots of vegetables, I’m allowed the occasional treat.»
   - true
   - false

2. «A suntan protects me from skin cancer.»
   - true
   - false

3. «Staying at my ideal weight helps protect me from both heart disease and cancer.»
   - true
   - false

4. «If I smoke and drink alcohol regularly, my cancer risk is considerably increased.»
   - true
   - false

5. «I don’t need to see my doctor unless a cough lasts at least a month.»
   - true
   - false

6. «All women over 50 should go for mammography.»
   - true
   - false

7. «If a mole is growing, a doctor should see it without delay.»
   - true
   - false

8. «Young women don’t need to bother about going for cervical smear tests.»
   - true
   - false

Results of your quiz inside.