

Irish Cancer Prevention Network



An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Scaghtástála
National Screening Service

Newsletter January 2023

Welcome to the Irish Cancer Prevention Network (ICPN) newsletter. This quarterly newsletter shares with you cancer prevention facts and initiatives.

You can contact the ICPN at prevention@cancercontrol.ie to share your cancer prevention initiatives.

ICPN Steps to Reduce your Cancer Risk: Facts

Each individual person's risk of getting cancer is influenced by a wide range of factors. Things that we can't change (like our age and genetics) and things that we can change (like what we eat, whether we drink alcohol, exercise, and protect our skin from the sun).

However, **we can all take steps to reduce our risk of cancer.**

The ICPN Steps to reduce your cancer risk poster can be downloaded [here](#).

Reducing cancer risk eLearning programme:

The HSE National Cancer Control Programme have provided a free eLearning programme, available on HSeLanD, on '**Reducing Cancer Risk**'. This programme is for health and social care professionals. It consists of 11 short modules on the things we can change to reduce our cancer risk - otherwise known as 'modifiable cancer risk factors.' Modifiable cancer risk factors include tobacco smoking, alcohol consumption, physical activity, healthy eating and protecting our skin from the sun.

The modules aim to develop your knowledge of these modifiable cancer risk factors and signpost you to further resources for you and the people you support. Most modules take 10 to 15 minutes to complete.

Each module covers:

- How the modifiable risk factor affects cancer risk
- Which cancers are related to the risk factor
- Cancer risk reduction advice
- Signposts to resources and further trusted sources of information, for both you and the people you support

Each module is evidence based and has been developed in conjunction with subject matter experts. Making positive changes in any one of these areas is expected to offer cancer risk reduction benefit. However, the most benefit to be gained is by treating them as an integrated pattern of behaviours that can be considered as a single over-arching “package” or way of life. You can choose which modules you want to complete at a time convenient to you and you can dip in and out of each module, resuming where you left off. We hope you’ll enjoy these modules and develop your knowledge on modifiable cancer risk factors.

The 11 module topics are:

	1. Tobacco		5. Physical activity		9. Breastfeeding, hormonal contraception and HRT
	2. Alcohol		6. Screening		10. Vaccinations
	3. Skin protection		7. Healthy eating		11. Workplace carcinogens
	4. Body weight		8. Radon		

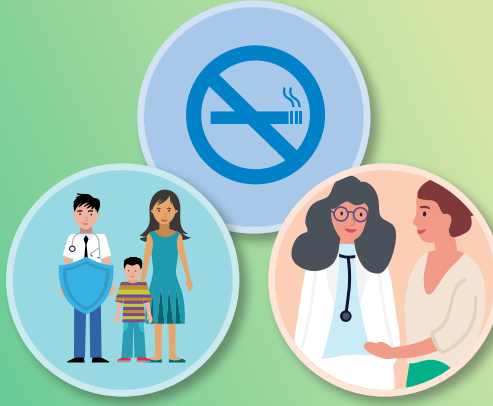
World Cancer Day: Steps to reduce our cancer risk

Webinar

Steps to reduce our cancer risk

Learn about smoking, vaccines and HRT

DATE: **Thursday 2nd February**
TIME: **1-2 pm**




Visit www.hse.ie/cancerprevention for the registration link

Brought to you by

Irish Cancer Prevention Network

for
World Cancer Day



World Cancer Day (WCD) is an international awareness day held each year on the 4th of February. The day seeks to raise awareness of cancer and empower individuals, populations and governments to take action to prevent and tackle cancer.

The ICPN aims to increase knowledge of the practical steps we can all take to reduce our cancer risk. The ICPN [reduce your cancer risk poster](#) outlines 12 lifestyle and environmental factors and provides information on how they affect cancer risk and the action you can take to reduce your risk.

Did you know?

- **Tobacco** contains chemicals that increase the risk of at least [15 types of cancer](#). Tobacco products include cigarettes, roll your own, chewing tobacco, pipes or cigars. The best form of defence is not to start smoking. Quitting tobacco products reduces your cancer risk. For information to support a person to quit smoking refer to the [National Stop Smoking Clinical Guidelines](#) or visit www.quit.ie
- **Being exposed to someone else's tobacco smoke** also increases your cancer risk. Make your home, car and workplace smoke free.
- **Vaccinations** can reduce the risk of some kinds of cancer. The human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine reduces the risk of a range of cancers including cervical, penis, anal, mouth and throat cancer. Hepatitis B vaccine reduces risk of liver cancer. For more information visit www.immunisation.ie

- **Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT)** can increase risk of breast, womb and ovarian cancer but the increased risk is small particularly when compared to other risk factors, such as being overweight. The risk from HRT depends on many different things. This includes the type of HRT, when people start taking it, how long they take it for, age, and general health. For some people, the benefits of taking HRT outweigh the risks. Everyone is different. Encourage people to talk to their GP about their options.

The ICPN reduce your cancer risk poster can be downloaded [here](#)

Reduce your risk of cancer

Physical Activity

- Physical activity can reduce your risk of cancer by promoting healthy hormone and insulin levels, reducing inflammation and helping maintain a healthy body weight.
- Any amount of activity is better than none.
- Adults should try to aim for at least:
 - 150 minutes of moderate physical activity across each week (moderate physical activity makes you a little out of breath, but you can talk comfortably)
 - or
 - 75 minutes of vigorous activity across each week (vigorous activities will raise your heart rate, make you sweat and feel out of breath) and
 - muscle strengthening activities of moderate or greater intensity that involve all major muscle groups on 2 or more days a week.
- For more information visit www.healthpromotion.ie

Smoking

- Tobacco contains chemicals that increase the risk of at least 15 types of cancer. Tobacco products include cigarettes, roll your own, chewing tobacco, pipes or cigars.
- The best form of defence is not to start smoking.
- Quitting tobacco products reduces your cancer risk.
- For help, quitting, visit the HSE Stop Smoking service www.quit.ie or call 1800 201 201.

Second Hand Smoke

- Second hand tobacco smoke increases cancer risk.
- Make your home, car and workplace smoke free.

Alcohol

- When alcohol is broken down in your body it can damage your body's cells.
- Alcohol increases risk of at least 7 types of cancer including mouth, throat, larynx, oesophagus, breast, stomach and bowel.
- You can reduce your risk of cancer if you do not drink alcohol. The less you drink, the lower your risk of cancer.
- Visit www.healthpromotion.ie for more information.

Body Weight

- Higher body weight can affect your hormone levels and your immune system, increasing risk of cancer.
- You can reduce risk of cancer by keeping weight within a healthy range.
- Eating a healthy balanced diet, being physically active, getting enough sleep and taking care of your mental health can all help to maintain a healthy body weight throughout life.
- Support options are available to those living with overweight or obesity. Ask your GP for information.

Radon

- Radon is a naturally occurring radioactive gas found in the environment.
- It has no colour, taste or smell.
- It can increase the risk of lung cancer in people exposed to high levels of radon over long periods of time.
- The risk from radon is even higher for smokers, so it is even more important to think about quitting smoking.
- Support options are available to those living with radon in your home or workplace, and how to reduce them. Visit www.radon.ie

Workplace

- Some workplaces involve exposure to cancer-causing substances such as asbestos, silica dust, asbestos and wood dust.
- Follow your workplace safety risk assessment control measures to reduce your exposure to cancer-causing substances in your workplace.
- If you work outdoors make sure you protect your skin from the sun's ultraviolet radiation.
- Visit www.healthpromotion.ie or www.hse.ie/ICPN for more information.

Hormones Oral Contraceptive Pill (OCP)

- The combined OCP can increase the risk of ovarian, breast and cervical cancers but can decrease the risk of colorectal and stomach cancer.
- Each person's risk will be different.
- Talk to your GP about what is right for you.

Hormones Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT)

- Menopausal HRT can increase risk of breast, womb and ovarian cancer but the increased risk is small.
- The risk from HRT depends on many different things. This includes the type of HRT, when people start taking it, how long they take it for, age, and general health.
- For some, the benefits of taking HRT outweigh the risks. Everyone is different.
- Talk to your GP about your options.

Cancer Screening

- Consider taking part in organised population screening programmes for:
 - Breast cancer (women aged 50-69 years). Visit www.breastcheck.ie
 - Cervical cancer (women and people with a cervix aged 25-65 years). Visit www.coloncancer.ie
 - Bowel cancer (people aged 60-69 years). Visit www.bowelcancer.ie

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Contact prevention@canccercontrol.ie or visit www.hse.ie/cancerprevention for more information

Cancer Prevention Initiatives

World Cancer Day webinar 2nd February 1.00pm -2.00pm

The ICPN is hosting a webinar for the public on steps to reduce our cancer risk, covering:

- Smoking tobacco and second hand smoking
- Vaccinations
- HRT

Register to watch live, receive the link to watch back, or share with members of the general public. To book your place click [here](#)

Ireland's roadmap to eliminate cervical cancer

To mark Cervical Cancer Prevention Week (23-29 January), the National Screening Service joined forces with the NCCP and National Immunisation Office to launch Ireland's [roadmap to eliminate cervical cancer](#). Ireland's roadmap, shows the strides made so far towards this global goal, and signposts the future direction we will take, breaking this ambitious journey into achievable stages. For more information click [here](#)

Cancer prevention resources available on healthpromotion.ie

You can now order cancer risk reduction resources from healthpromotion.ie if you wish to order printed resources please visit www.healthpromotion.ie and choose 'cancer' on the drop down menu.

Irish Cancer Society resources on how to reduce your risk of developing a variety of cancers

The Irish Cancer Society has a broad range of cancer prevention booklets, leaflets, factsheets, posters and other resources which provide information on how to reduce your risk of developing a variety of cancers. These resources are available to download or order directly from their website [here](#)

Publications

National Screening Service – [Empowering Communities to Promote Equity in Cancer Risk Reduction, Screening and Early Diagnosis](#)

The National Cancer Registry of Ireland (NCRI) published the ‘Cancer in Ireland 1994-2020: Annual Statistical Report of the National Cancer Registry’ providing data on cancer incidence, mortality and survival for cancer in Ireland 1994 – 2020. The report is available [here](#)

NCRI have also developed a range of infographics on [Lung Cancer](#); [Breast Cancer](#) and [Prostate Cancer](#).

Cancer Risk Reduction Awareness Dates for your diary

- European Cervical Cancer Prevention Week 17-23 January 2023
- World Cancer Day 4th February 2023
- No Smoking Day 22nd February 2023
- Bowel Cancer Awareness Month March 2023
- HPV Awareness Day 4th March 2023

A continued focus on cancer prevention is essential to reduce the serious impact of cancer on the lives of thousands of people in Ireland.

The ICPN provides an avenue to collaborate and identify opportunities to work together to prevent cancer for current and future generations. We aim to support implementation of the National Cancer Strategy’s cancer prevention recommendations.

Visit www.hse.ie/cancerprevention for more information and resources.

Please contact the ICPN for support with your cancer prevention ideas, initiatives or research at prevention@cancercontrol.ie