

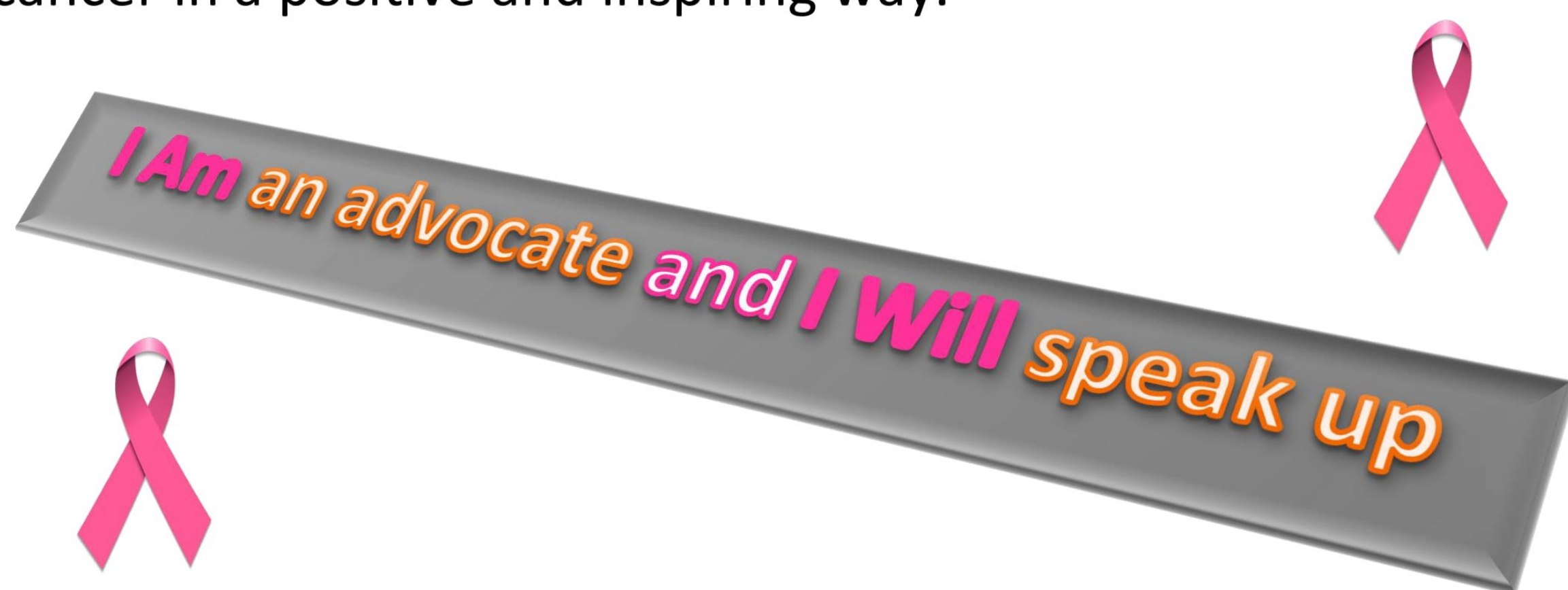
World Cancer Day

FEB
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I Am and I Will
You are the hero of this story.

Each year on **4 February**, *World Cancer Day empowers all of us across the world to show support, raise our collective voice, take personal action and press our governments to do more.*

World Cancer Day is the only day on the global health calendar where we can all unite and rally under the one banner of cancer in a positive and inspiring way.



#IAmAndIWill

Whoever you are, you have the power to reduce the impact of cancer for yourself, the people you love and for the world. It's time to make a personal commitment.

The theme: 2019-2021

2019 marks the launch of the 3-year 'I Am and I will' is an empowering call-to-action urging for personal commitment and represents the power of individual action taken now to impact the future.

A 3-year campaign for impact

World Cancer Day is a campaign built to resonate, inspire change and mobilise action long after the day has passed. A multi-year campaign offers a chance to create long-lasting impact by increasing public-facing exposure and engagement, more opportunities to build global awareness and impact-driven action.

Key Cancer Facts

- **9.6 million** people die from cancer every year.
- **At least one third** of common cancers are preventable.
- Cancer is the **second-leading** cause of death worldwide.
- **70%** of cancer deaths occur in low-to-middle income countries.
- Up to **3.7 million** lives could be saved each year by implementing resource appropriate strategies for prevention, early detection and treatment.
- The total annual economic cost of cancer is estimated at **US\$1.16 trillion**.

What is cancer ?

Cancer is a disease which occurs when changes in a group of normal cells within the body lead to uncontrolled, abnormal growth forming a lump called a tumour; this is true of all cancers except leukaemia (cancer of the blood). If left untreated, tumours can grow and spread into the surrounding normal tissue, or to other parts of the body via the bloodstream and lymphatic systems, and can affect the digestive, nervous and circulatory systems or release hormones that may affect body function.

Tumours can be divided into three groups: benign, malignant or precancerous

Benign tumours are not cancerous and rarely threaten life. They tend to grow quite slowly, do not spread to other parts of the body and are usually made up of cells quite similar to normal or healthy cells. They will only cause a problem if they grow very large, becoming uncomfortable or press on other organs - for example a brain tumour inside the skull.

Malignant tumours are faster growing than benign tumours and have the ability to spread and destroy neighbouring tissue. Cells of malignant tumours can break off from the main (primary) tumour and spread to other parts of the body through a process known as metastasis. Upon invading healthy tissue at the new site they continue to divide and grow. These secondary sites are known as metastases and the condition is referred to as metastatic cancer.

Precancerous (or premalignant) describes the condition involving abnormal cells which may (or is likely to) develop into cancer.

Types of cancers

Cancer can be classified according to the type of cell they start from. There are five main types:

Carcinoma – A cancer that arises from the epithelial cells (the lining of cells that helps protect or enclose organs). Carcinomas may invade the surrounding tissues and organs and metastasise to the lymph nodes and other areas of the body. The most common forms of cancer in this group are breast, prostate, lung and colon cancer

Sarcoma – A type of malignant tumour of the bone or soft tissue (fat, muscle, blood vessels, nerves and other connective tissues that support and surround organs). The most common forms of sarcoma are leiomyosarcoma, liposarcoma and osteosarcoma

Lymphoma and Myeloma – Lymphoma and Myeloma are cancers that begin in the cells of the immune system. Lymphoma is a cancer of the lymphatic system, which runs all through the body, and can therefore occur anywhere. Myeloma (or multiple myeloma) starts in the plasma cells, a type of white blood cell that produces antibodies to help fight infection. This cancer can affect the cell's ability to produce antibodies effectively

Leukaemia – Leukaemia is a cancer of the white blood cells and bone marrow, the tissue that forms blood cells. There are several subtypes; common are lymphocytic leukaemia and chronic lymphocytic leukaemia

Brain and spinal cord cancers – these are known as central nervous system cancers. Some are benign while others can grow and spread.

Causes

Cancers can be caused by a number of different factors and, as with many other illnesses, most cancers are the result of exposure to a number of different causal factors. It is important to remember that, while some factors cannot be modified, around one third of cancer cases can be prevented by reducing behavioural and dietary risks.

Alcohol – The evidence that all types of alcoholic drinks are a cause of a number of cancers is now stronger than ever before. Alcohol can increase the risk of six types of cancers, including bowel, breast, mouth, and throat, oesophageal, liver and stomach. The evidence suggests that in general, the more alcohol people consume the higher the risk of many cancers, and that even moderate alcohol intake increases the risk of cancer.

Being overweight or obese – excess weight has been linked to an increased risk of developing 12 different cancers, including bowel and pancreatic cancers. In general, greater weight gain, particularly as adults, is associated with greater cancer risks.

Diet and nutrition – Experts suggest that diets and nutritional intake, particularly diets high in red meats, processed meats, salted foods and low in fruits and vegetables have an impact on cancer risks, particularly colorectum, nasopharynx and stomach.

Tobacco – Tobacco smoke contains at least 80 different cancer-causing substances. When smoke is inhaled the chemicals enter the lungs, pass into the blood stream and are transported throughout the body. This is why smoking or chewing tobacco not only causes lung and mouth cancers but is also related to many other cancers. The more a person smokes, the younger they start, and the longer they keep smoking, all further increase the risk of cancer. Currently tobacco use is responsible for around 22% of cancer deaths.

Ionising radiation – Manmade sources of radiation can cause cancer and are a risk for workers. These include radon, x-rays, gamma rays and other forms of high-energy radiation. Prolonged and unprotected exposure to ultraviolet radiations from the sun, sunlamps and tanning beds can also lead to melanoma and skin malignancies. Fair skinned people, individuals with a lot of moles or who have a family history of melanoma or non-melanoma skin cancer, are at highest risk. However, people of all skin tones can develop skin cancer, including individuals with darker skin.

Work place hazards – Some people risk being exposed to a cancer-causing substance because of the work that they do. For example, workers in the chemical dye industry have been found to have a higher incidence than normal of bladder cancer. Asbestos is a well-known workplace cause of cancer - particularly a cancer called mesothelioma, which most commonly affects the covering of the lungs.

Infection – Infectious agents are responsible for around 2.2 million cancer deaths annually. This does not mean that these cancers can be caught like an infection; rather the virus can cause changes in cells that make them more likely to become cancerous. Around 70% of cervical cancers are caused by Human papillomavirus (HPV) infections, while liver cancer and Non-Hodgkin Lymphoma can be caused by the Hepatitis B and C virus, and lymphomas are linked to the Epstein-Barr virus. Bacterial infections have not been thought of as cancer-causing agents in the past, but more recent studies have shown that people who have helicobacter pylori infection of their stomach develop inflammation of the stomach lining, which increases the risk of stomach cancer.

Age – Many types of cancer become more prevalent with age. The longer people live, the more exposure there is to carcinogens and the more time there is for genetic changes or mutations to occur within their cells.

Genetics – Some people are unfortunately born with a genetically inherited high risk for a specific cancer. This does not mean developing cancer is guaranteed, but a genetic predisposition makes the disease more likely.

The immune system – People who have weakened immune systems are more at risk of developing some types of cancer. This includes people who have had organ transplants and take drugs to suppress their immune systems to stop organ rejection, plus people who have HIV or AIDS, or other medical conditions which reduce their immunity to disease.

Source: <https://www.worldcancerday.org>