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Cancer Facts for Men

- [Prostate cancer](#)
- [Colorectal cancer](#)
- [Lung cancer](#)
- [Skin cancer](#)
- [Testicular cancer](#)
- [What else you can do to help reduce your cancer risk](#)

Some of the cancers that most often affect men are prostate, colorectal, lung, and skin cancers. Knowing about these cancers and what you can do to help prevent them or find them early (when they are small, haven't spread, and might be easier to treat) may help save your life.

Prostate cancer

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men in the US, other than skin cancer. It's also the second-leading cause of cancer death (after lung cancer). About 1 in 8 men will get prostate cancer in their lifetime.

It can happen at any age, but the chances go up as a man gets older. Most prostate cancers are found in men over the age of 65. Prostate cancer happens more often in Black men than in men of other races and ethnicities. And when Black men do get it, they are often younger.

Having one or more close relatives with prostate cancer also increases a man's risk of having prostate cancer.

What you can do

Talk to a health care provider about screening.

The American Cancer Society recommends that men have a chance to make an informed decision with their health care provider about whether to be screened for prostate cancer. The decision should be made after getting information about the risks and potential benefits of prostate cancer screening. The discussion about screening should take place at:

- **Age 50 for men at average risk** of prostate cancer who are expected to live at least 10 more years
- **Age 45 for men at high risk** of prostate cancer, including all Black men and any man with a father or brother diagnosed with prostate cancer before age 65
- **Age 40 for men at even higher risk**, including any men with more than one

The American Cancer Society recommends the following for people at average risk for colorectal cancer:

- **Everyone should start regular screening at age 45.**
- People who are in good health and with a life expectancy of more than 10 years should continue regular colorectal cancer screening **through age 75.**
- **For people ages 76 to 85**, the decision to be screened should be based on a person's preferences, life expectancy, health, and screening history.
- **People over age 85** should no longer get colorectal cancer screening.

Screening can be done either with a sensitive test that looks for signs of cancer in a person's stool (a stool-based test), or with an exam that looks at the colon and rectum (a visual exam). These options are listed below.

Screening tests for colorectal cancer

Stool-based tests

- Fecal immunochemical test (FIT)* every year, **or**
- Guaiac-based fecal occult blood test (gFOBT)* every year, **or**

provider about your coverage. If you don't have insurance or can't afford cancer screening, [find free and low-cost screening options](#).¹

Lung cancer

[Lung cancer](#)² is the second most common type of cancer in men in the US and the leading cause of cancer death.

What you can do

Get screened.

The American Cancer Society recommends yearly lung cancer screening with a low-dose CT (LDCT) scan for people who:

- **Are ages 50 to 80 years** and smoke or used to smoke

AND

- **Have at least a 20 pack-year history of smoking** (A pack-year is equal to smoking 1 pack of cigarettes per day for a year. For example, a person could have a 20 pack-year history by smoking 1 pack a day for 20 years or by smoking 2 packs a day for 10 years.)

Before deciding to get screened, people should talk to their health care provider about the purpose of screening, how it's done, the benefits, limitations, and possible harms of screening. People who still smoke should be counseled about quitting and offered resources to help them quit.

Avoid tobacco and exposures.

Not all lung cancers are preventable. But there are things you can do to lower your risk.

- If you don't smoke, don't start. Avoid breathing in other people's smoke.

- Avoid all products with tobacco.
- Stay away from secondhand smoke.
- Avoid or limit exposure to cancer-causing chemicals that might be in the home or workplace.

Skin cancer

[Skin cancer⁴](#)

Testicular cancer

Although testicular cancer can happen at any age, it is the most common cancer in men ages 15 to 35. White men are more likely to get testicular cancer than other races or ethnicities. It's also one of the most curable cancers.

Other things that increase a person's risk for testicular cancer:

- Having cryptorchidism (a testicle that hasn't dropped, also known as undescended)
- Having hypospadias (condition at birth where the opening of the penis is on the underside instead of the tip)
- A personal or family history of testicular cancer
- HIV infection, especially those with AIDS
- Certain genetic disorders

What you can do

Know the signs.

There aren't any recommended screening tests for testicular cancer, but the American Cancer Society recommends men be aware of the signs and symptoms. Some doctors suggest all men check their testicles once a month after puberty.

Signs and symptoms of testicular cancer can include:

- A lump or swelling in one testicle
- Breast growth or soreness
- Heaviness or aching in the lower abdomen (belly) or scrotum

If you notice any changes in the way your testicles look or feel, talk to a doctor right away.

What else you can do to help reduce your cancer risk

Almost half of all adult cancers might be prevented by things we can do or change.

- Stay away from tobacco.

Siegel RL, Miller KD, Wagle NS, Jemal A. Cancer statistics, 2023. *CA Cancer J Clin.* 2023; 73(1): 17-48. doi:10.3322/caac.21763

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