

Screening helps detect early stage cancers...

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that is thicker or harder than the rest.

- Puckering, dimpling or swelling of the skin on your breast or around your nipples.

- Orange peel skin – patches of skin which may or may not be discoloured, and the pores stand out.

- Bleeding or discharge from your nipples, or crusting on your nipples.

- Tenderness, redness or

pain in your breasts.

Colorectal cancer

Colorectal cancer is the third most common cancer for Canadian men and women. It is one of the most detectable and, if found early, most treatable types of cancer. It includes cancer of the colon (large bowel), the rectum, appendix and some anal cancers.

Most colorectal cancers start as small growths (pol-

yps) on the bowel wall.

What you can do

- All women over 50 should have a fecal occult blood test (FOBT) to check for the presence of blood in a sample of their stool.

- If the FOBT is positive, it should be followed with a colonoscopy or a double-contrast barium enema and sigmoidoscopy.

- Occasionally rectal tumours may be found during a digital rectal exam (DRE), when your doctor feels for abnormalities inside the rectum with a gloved finger. DRE is not as reliable as FOBT in finding colorectal cancer.

What to watch for:

- Any change in bowel habits (diarrhea, constipation) that lasts more than a few days.

- General stomach discomfort (bloating, fullness, cramping) that lasts more than a few days.

- Frequent gas pains.

- Blood in or on the stool.

- Stools that are narrower than usual.

- A strong and continuing need to move your bowels, but with little result.

- A feeling that you are not completely emptying your bowel.

- Weight loss.

- Tiredness.

Skin cancer

Skin cancer has become

one of the most common types of cancer in Canada. The different types of skin cancer (basal cell, squamous cell or melanoma) begin in the different cells of the skin. Basal cell and squamous cell skin cancers are two of the most preventable and treatable types of cancer.

What you can do

- Learn what to look for and check your skin regularly, as most skin cancers can be treated if they're caught early enough.

- Check with your doctor if you notice any changes or are not sure about what you should be looking for.

What to watch for:

- Any change in the shape, colour, size or surface of a birthmark or a mole.

- Any new growth on your skin, for example pale, pearly

nodules that grow larger and crust or red, scaly, sharply defined patches.

- Any sore that does not heal.

- Any patch of skin that bleeds, oozes, swells, itches or becomes red and bumpy.

Cervical cancer

Cervical cancer is usually a slow-growing cancer that starts in the cells of the cervix. The cervix is at the tip of the uterus (or womb) and connects the uterus to the vagina.

A woman is at higher risk of developing cervical cancer if she becomes sexually active in her teens or has multiple sex partners, both of which increases her risk of exposure to the human papilloma virus (HPV – a sexually transmitted disease).

There has been a big drop in cervical cancer incidence and mortality in Canada because of regular Pap testing. During a Pap test, a doctor takes cells from the cervix that are then checked for signs of cancer.

What to watch for

- Abnormal vaginal bleeding or blood-stained vaginal discharge between your periods.


- Bleeding after intercourse.

- Pain, which may occur during intercourse.

When you want to know more about cancer or services available in your community, call the information specialists at the Canadian Cancer Society toll-free at 1-888-939-3333, email at info@cis.cancer.ca or visit our website www.cancer.ca.

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Tips on coping with cancer

your illness.

Learn how to work with the people involved with your care. Sharing information about yourself can help your healthcare team plan your care. Let them know if things seem unclear or confusing to you.

Find out who to call if something happens between visits. By asking what to expect in advance, you may feel better prepared to cope with any issues.

Tell others about it when you feel ready. As time goes on, family and close friends will learn that you have cancer. Many people with cancer find it helpful to talk about their feelings. This can give their loved ones the chance to offer support. However, you might need time to sort out some of your emotions first.

It's okay to let someone know you're not ready to talk, and that you'd rather wait for another time.

Use methods that helped you solve problems in the

past. Some may include: getting information, talking to others, finding ways to feel in control, try a support or self-help group.

Support groups are a good place to get information and learn from others. You may also feel less alone. You may prefer individual counselling, or one-to-one peer support. Ask your healthcare team about support groups and counselling services that may be available at your treatment centre.

The Canadian Cancer Society offers individual or group peer support programs for caregivers, family and friends. Their trained volunteers have been there – they have either had cancer themselves or have cared for someone with cancer.

For more information about ways to cope or to find out about support services available in your community, call an information specialist at our Cancer Information Service 1-888-939-3333.

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