



CANCER

Screening Q & A

What types of cancer are included in Cancer Care Ontario's screening program?

Breast screening: Regular breast cancer screening can find cancer when it is small and there is a better chance of treating it successfully.

Cervical screening: Cervical cancer is almost entirely preventable with regular screening and timely follow-up of abnormal Pap test results, supported by HPV (human papillomavirus) immunization.

Colon cancer screening: When colorectal cancer is caught early through screening and treated, a person with this disease has a 90% chance of being cured.

What does screening cost?

Screening is free of charge provided you are eligible for your respective provincial or territorial health insurance plan.

Why is there only breast, cervical and colon screening?

At this time, scientific evidence does not support public screening programs for other cancers.

What about prostate cancer?

The PSA test used to screen for prostate cancer has not yet been proven to be effective. However, there is some evidence that it could help men ages 55 to 69, or men whose close relatives have had prostate cancer. Ask your doctor whether PSA testing is right for you.

What about other kinds of cancer?

Being aware of your body and getting checked if you have symptoms can help find cancer so it can be treated.

For example, your doctor or nurse practitioner can check your skin to make sure you have no suspicious spots that could lead to skin cancer.



Why Get Screened?

Cancer screening tests look for cancer before you have symptoms

Screening can find cancer before symptoms appear. Finding abnormal tissue early can make cancer easier to treat. By the time symptoms appear, the cancer may have grown and spread. This can make the cancer harder to treat.

When your doctor suggests a screening test, it does not mean you have cancer. Screening tests are done when you have no cancer symptoms.

Why get screened for breast cancer?

- Breast cancer is the most common cancer in Canadian women.
- In 2014, about 9,500 Ontario women were diagnosed with breast cancer. About 1,950 have died from the disease.

Why get screened for cervical cancer?

- In 2014, about 630 Ontario women were diagnosed with cervical cancer. About 150 women have died from it.
- Regular Pap tests can find changes in the cells of the cervix before they become cancerous.

Why get screened for colorectal cancer?

- Colon cancer is the second most common cause of cancer deaths in men and the third most common cause in women.
- In 2014, about 8,900 Ontarians were diagnosed with colorectal cancer. About 3,400 have died from it.
- Almost 70% of people diagnosed with colon cancer have no family history of the disease.

Screening can also provide peace of mind when cancer is not detected.