First Nations People: Cancer Risk Factors and Screening

**COMMERCIAL TOBACCO**

To many First Nations people, tobacco is a *sacred plant* that has spiritual and medicinal purposes. The recreational use of commercial tobacco (e.g. cigarettes) has no connection to First Nations spirituality.

Smoking commercial tobacco can increase the risk of lung cancer.

**ALCOHOL**

Many people do not know that drinking alcohol can cause cancer. Drinking even small amounts of alcohol increases the risk of many cancers.

Cancers related to drinking alcohol:
- Breast
- Mouth
- Throat
- Esophagus
- Liver
- Colon and rectum

Over 1 in 3 on-reserve First Nations adults did not drink alcohol in the past year.

First Nations adults are almost 2 times more likely to smoke cigarettes than other adults.

First Nations teens are more likely to smoke than other teens.

For more information on the Cancer in First Nations in Ontario: Risk Factors and Screening Report, visit: cancercare.on.ca/FirstNationsReport

For more information on the Prevention System Quality Index, visit: cancercareontario.ca/PSQI
Traditional First Nations diets are largely composed of foods grown, harvested and hunted from the land and water and are a healthy choice.

An unhealthy diet increases the risk of colorectal cancer.

First Nations adults are more likely to live in households that are food insecure (e.g. low availability of culturally appropriate food, households worried about running out of food, etc.).

Being overweight or obese causes over 2,500 cancers diagnosed in Ontario every year.

About 3 in 4 First Nations adults are overweight or obese.

On-reserve First Nations adults are less likely to be physically active compared to off-reserve First Nations adults and other adults. Women are less likely to be physically active than men.

CANCER PREVENTION

Stop smoking
Limit alcohol use
Eat traditional food, fruit, vegetables & whole grains
Be physically active

CANCER SCREENING

For more information on cancer screening, visit: cancercareontario.ca/get-checked-cancer

To learn your personal cancer risk, start your 5 minute assessment online here: mycanceriq.ca

Need this information in an accessible format?
1-855-460-2647, TTY 416-217-1815, publicaffairs@cancercare.on.ca  PCC4078

Data about on-reserve First Nations peoples in Ontario were taken from the First Nations Regional Health Survey Phase 2 (2008/10), and data about off-reserve First Nations peoples and non-Aboriginal people in Ontario were taken from the Canadian Community Health Survey (2007–2013)

CREDIT: Artwork in banner by Mike Ormsby (W’DAE B’WA). Leadership Journey (through canoe)