

New Information Revealed On Preventing Up To One Third Of All Cancer

A new study, published in the Lancet, suggests that specific lifestyle changes would impact more than a third of cancer deaths worldwide. Many cancers have preventable causes that could be managed and prevented through changes in lifestyle and environment.

These factors include

- Smoking
- Alcohol use
- Unsafe sex
- Low fruit and vegetable intake
- obesity
- lack of exercise
- contaminated injections
- indoor smoke from fuels

While the impact of smoking is a well-known risk factor in health, many of these other factors come as a surprise to many. Modern nations tend to have low intakes of nutritious whole foods and instead consume greater amounts of highly processed foods, containing high levels of salt, fat and refined sugar. Lack of exercise is also a significant lifestyle factor for many people in industrialized countries who tend to sit in offices and engage in little physical activity.

Indoor smoke from fuels creates a risk challenge for those who burn kerosene for heat. The invisible fumes and traces of soot damage exposed tissues including the lining of the lungs as well as exposed skin and the surface of the eyes.

These factors add up to 2.43 million of the annual toll of seven million cancer deaths reported in 2001 worldwide, according to data from the World Health Organization's Comparative Risk Assessment project, as well as other international sources. By reducing these cancer risks, one global benefit is to make available better funding for the medical treatment of the remaining millions affected by cancer. As cancer is very expensive to treat, reducing the impact of these risk factors provides economic benefit as well as the improvement of many lives through better health.

The research also indicates smoking is linked to deaths from the following cancers.

- Lung
- Bronchial and tracheal cancers
- Oesophageal cancers and oral cancers.

Oesophageal cancer deaths and oral cancer deaths are also linked to the abuse of alcohol consumption and may increase the impact of the other risk factors as well. Figures are based on a review of published studies, government reports and international databases.

With one out of five cancer deaths worldwide attributed to smoking, according to 2001 research data, the importance of quitting smoking could not be more obvious.

The impact of second hand smoke was not covered in this report.

The true importance of this data is that it shows that we can do something about cancer. The risk factors listed are all issues that we have individual power over. While some forms of cancer may be caused by more elusive factors there are still many things we can do to protect ourselves and ensure an improved quality of life through better living and the self-control of clearly identified risk factors. Some of these factors may be challenging to some, but by asking yourself the right questions such as "how can I get more exercise" instead of "why can't I find time to go the gym" you will find the answers you seek. The only step that remains is to take action.

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