

Irish Cancer Prevention Network



An tSeirbhís Náisiúnta Scaghástála
National Screening Service

Newsletter April 2022

Welcome to the Irish Cancer Prevention Network (ICPN) newsletter. This quarterly newsletter shares with you cancer prevention facts and initiatives.

You can contact the ICPN at prevention@cancercontrol.ie to share your cancer prevention initiatives.

ICPN Steps to Reduce your Cancer Risk: Facts

Each individual's risk of getting cancer is influenced by a wide range of factors. Things that we can't change (like our age and genetics) and things that we can change (like what we eat, whether we drink alcohol, exercise, and protect our skin from the sun).

However, **we can all take steps to reduce our risk of cancer.**

The ICPN Steps to reduce your cancer risk poster can be downloaded [here](#).

Steps to reduce your cancer risk: Breastfeeding^{1,2,3}

Breastfeeding can decrease the risk of developing breast cancer for the mother. Research has also suggested that there is a protective effect against endometrial and ovarian cancers.

There are two ways in which breastfeeding can reduce breast cancer risk:

- breastfeeding causes changes in hormonal influences on breast cells altering the total exposure to specific hormones, which can decrease breast cancer risk
- sustained exfoliation of breast tissue during breastfeeding could reduce cancer risk through getting rid of damaged cells

1. World Cancer Research Fund/American Institute for Cancer Research, 2018. Lactation and the risk of cancer. Continuous Update Project Expert Report
2. Scoccianti, C., Key, T., Anderson, A., Armaroli, P., Berrino, F., Cecchini, M., Boutron-Ruault, M., Leitzmann, M., Norat, T., Powers, H., Schüz, J., Wiseman, M. and Romieu, I., 2015. European Code against Cancer 4th Edition: Breastfeeding and cancer. Cancer Epidemiology, 39, pp.S101-S106.
3. <https://www.hse.ie/eng/services/publications/performancereports/>

The longer a mother breastfeeds, the greater the protection for her against cancer. Research demonstrates that there is a 2% decreased risk of breast cancer for every five months increase in breastfeeding.

They say it takes a village to raise a baby, the same is for breastfeeding. More mothers each year are trying breastfeeding and support is available including:

- Visit www.mychild.ie to speak to a lactation consultant on the HSE's free online breastfeeding service, available 24/7, 365 days a year
- Midwives & lactation consultants (IBCLC's) in every maternity hospital
- Public Health Nurses
- HSE lactation consultants in some counties
- Breastfeeding support groups, visit <https://www2.hse.ie/services/breastfeeding-support-search/> to find groups in your local area
- Voluntary groups – La Leche League of Ireland, Cuidiú & Friends of Breastfeeding
- Association of Lactation Consultants of Ireland
- GPs and Pharmacists



You can watch back the ICPN World Cancer Day webinar 2022 talk from Laura McHugh, National Breastfeeding Coordinator talk on '[Thinking about breastfeeding: Steps to reduce your cancer risk](#)'.

Cancer Prevention Initiatives

Irish Cancer Prevention Network steps to reduce your cancer risk social media icons

You can download the ICPN steps to reduce your cancer risk icons for your use

- [Steps to reduce your cancer risk icon: Alcohol](#)
- [Steps to reduce your cancer risk icon: Smoking](#)
- [Steps to reduce your cancer risk icon: Physical Activity](#)
- [Steps to reduce your cancer risk icon: Eating for Healthy](#)
- [Steps to reduce your cancer risk icon: Body Weight](#)
- [Steps to reduce your cancer risk icon: Skin Protection](#)
- [Steps to reduce your cancer risk icon: Radon](#)
- [Steps to reduce your cancer risk icon: Vaccines](#)
- [Steps to reduce your cancer risk icon: Breastfeeding](#)
- [Steps to reduce your cancer risk icon: Cancer Screening](#)
- [Steps to reduce your cancer risk icon: Work Place](#)

Cancer Prevention Initiatives

Healthy Ireland SunSmart Campaign (April-September 2022)

Skin cancer is the most common form of cancer in Ireland with 13,000 cases diagnosed annually. Yet, skin cancer is largely preventable by protecting skin.

As part of the Healthy Ireland SunSmart campaign, the ICPN are working together to support people to protect their skin from the sun.

Protecting your skin from the sun no matter where you are or why you are outdoors can reduce your risk of skin cancer. When out and about, follow the Healthy Ireland SunSmart 5S's.

As well as the 5 S's it is important to remember, in Ireland the UV radiation levels are high from April to September, even when it is cloudy. Stay safe by limiting time in the sun when it is strongest, typically between the hours of 11:00am-3:00pm. Do not deliberately try to get a suntan. Avoid getting a sunburn and never use a sunbed.

If you or your organisation would like to adopt SunSmart initiatives contact prevention@cancercontrol.ie or to access resources visit www.hse.ie/sunsmart

Slip on clothing that covers your skin, long sleeves, collared t-shirts

Slop on sunscreen on exposed areas using factor 50+ for children

Slap on a wide-brimmed hat

Seek shade - especially if outdoors between 11 am and 3 pm

Slide on sunglasses to protect your eyes

Be SunSmart HSE nccp National Cancer Control Programme hi SunSmart

Healthy Ireland SunSmart 5S's

SunSmart Initiatives

- To increase awareness of how to be SunSmart, the NCCP and Construction Industry Federation are hosting a free webinar called 'Skin Cancer and Protection for Outdoor Workers' on World Day for Safety and Health at Work, 28th April at 4pm.

This webinar will help to raise awareness and support outdoor workers and their employers to reduce the risk of skin cancer.

[Register here](#)

- You can also check out the [Irish Skin Foundation seasonal UV changes infographic](#) for your use and feel free to distribute to others who may find this infographic useful.
- In May and June, the Maire Keating Foundation [Mobile Information Units](#) will be travelling to local communities across Ireland providing members of the public with information and education around sun safety, and how we can all protect our skin and reduce our risk of skin cancer. Check out their [Talking Melanoma podcast](#) for further information.

Men's Health Week MISSION: isPOSSIBLE



Men's Health Week (MHW) offers a unique opportunity to make positive changes by:

- heightening awareness of preventable health problems
- supporting men and boys to engage in healthier lifestyle choices /activities
- encouraging the early detection / treatment of health problems.

This year, MHW will run from Monday 13th – Sunday 19th June.

The theme for Ireland in 2022 is 'MISSION: isPOSSIBLE – The Action Starts with You'.

During the week, everyone is asked to set realistic and practical targets, and to recognise that where there's a will, there's a way!

Find out more about MHW at: <https://www.mhfi.org/mhw/about-mhw.html>

Bowel Cancer Awareness Month

- BowelScreens new endoscopy service at Mayo University Hospital is now performing colonoscopies for the National Bowel Screening Programme.

BowelScreen offers a free home bowel screening for approximately 500,000 men and women aged 60 to 69, every two years. The unit at MUH will provide colonoscopy services for BowelScreen participants in the Mayo region who have been found to have 'not normal' results following their home FIT tests.

Everyone aged 60-69 years is urged to check they are on the bowel screening register by visiting www.bowelscreen.ie or by calling the Freephone number 1800 45 45 55.

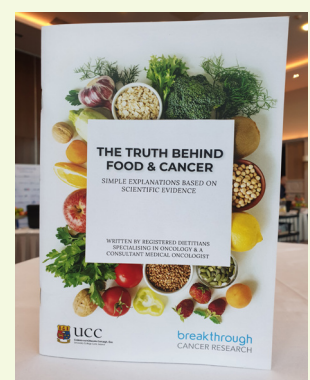
The free, simple at-home FIT kit test could help save your life. Register with BowelScreen today and get your FIT kit by visiting www.bowelscreen.ie or Freephone 1800 45 45 55.

- The Marie Keating Foundation "[Join The Bowel Movement](#)" campaign aims to make people aware of the early warning signs of bowel cancer, so if they notice a change, they will speak to their GP without delay. This campaign also showcases the importance of regular screening and encourages all those eligible for BowelScreen to sign up for the free service.

Food and Cancer

Breakthrough Cancer Research and UCC have published a new free booklet exposing myths about food and cancer. Launched on April 1st '[The Truth behind Diet and Cancer](#)' has information on meat, dairy, gluten, IV vitamins, enemas, intermittent fasting, detox, sugar, organic foods and more. The booklet is endorsed by NCCP, INDI and ISMO.

Also launched on the day was the 2nd edition of '[Good Nutrition for Cancer Recovery](#)'. Extended and improved, this 280 page cookbook is available free of charge and provides evidence-based advice on high-protein, high-calorie meals for people with poor appetite/ involuntary weight loss.



Physical Activity Research

The NCCP has funded a scoping review to ascertain what physical activity services or exercise programmes are available for cancer survivors in Ireland (specifically the ROI). The review aims to be as comprehensive as possible and cover research trials in addition to community or hospital-based programmes. We're also covering all ages (children and adults), all types of cancer and everything from pre-hab, during treatment and following treatment. If you know of any such programmes, we would be very grateful if you could make contact with Dr Sarah Hardcastle at 9023sarah@gmail.com.

Publications

- The NCCP worked in partnership with the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY) and the National Participation Office to undertake consultations with young people on skin cancer prevention behaviours. The research reports ways to support young people to protect their skin. Read the summary report [here](#).
- The National Cancer Control Programme will launch the Early Diagnosis of Symptomatic Cancer Plan 2022 – 2025 on a live webinar the 11th May at 1pm. Register [here](#) to attend.

Cancer Risk Reduction Awareness Dates for your diary

- Bowel Cancer Awareness Month April
- Skin Cancer Awareness Month May
- World Ovarian Day 8th May
- European Week Against Cancer 25th May
- World No Tobacco Day 31st May
- International Men's Health Week 13th June

A continued focus on cancer prevention is essential to reduce the serious impact of cancer on the lives of thousands of people in Ireland.

The ICPN provides an avenue to collaborate and identify opportunities to work together to prevent cancer for current and future generations. We aim to support implementation of the National Cancer Strategy's cancer prevention recommendations.

Visit www.hse.ie/cancerprevention for more information and resources.

Please contact the ICPN for support with your cancer prevention ideas, initiatives or research at prevention@cancercontrol.ie