DID YOU KNOW?

Cancer is the leading cause of death in Australia. Sadly, nearly 48,000 Australians will die from cancer in 2017.

THE GOOD NEWS

As it turns out, you might have more control than you thought when it comes to reducing your risk of cancer.
The team analysed data from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and the Australian Bureau of Statistics to determine how many cancer deaths each year are caused by preventable lifestyle factors.

A research team at QIMR Berghofer recently led an Australian-first study that found that 38% of cancer deaths in Australia each year are potentially preventable.

The findings mean that about 16,700 cancer deaths each year could be potentially avoided through lifestyle changes.

WHAT DID WE FIND OUT?

People can help reduce their risk of developing and dying from cancer. We analysed the impact of 20 lifestyle and environmental risk factors (under eight broad groups) that are known to cause cancer.
CANCER CAUSES

FACTOR

Alcohol consumption

Diet
- Low intake of dietary fibre
- Low intake of fruit
- Low intake of non-starchy vegetables
- High intake of red and processed meat

Infections
- Epstein-Barr virus (EBV)
- Hepatitis B virus (HBV)
- Hepatitis C virus (HCV)
- Human papillomavirus (HPV)
- Helicobacter pylori
- Human immunodeficiency virus, type 1 (HIV-1)
- Kaposi’s sarcoma herpes virus (KSHV)

CAUSALLY ASSOCIATED CANCERS*

Oral cavity and pharynx, oesophagus (squamous cell carcinoma), stomach, colorectum, liver, breast (pre- and post-menopausal)

Colorectum
- Oral cavity and pharynx, larynx, lung
- Oral cavity and pharynx, larynx
- Colon, rectum

Nasopharynx, Hodgkin’s lymphoma, Burkitt’s lymphoma
- Liver, non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma
- Oral cavity, oropharynx, anus, vulva, vagina, uterine cervix, penis
- Stomach (non-cardia), low-grade B-cell mucosa-associated lymphoid tissue (MALT) gastric lymphoma
- Anus, Kaposi’s sarcoma, uterine cervix, non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma
- Kaposi’s sarcoma

Overweight and obesity
- Oesophagus (adenocarcinoma), stomach (cardia), colorectum, liver, gallbladder, pancreas, breast (post-menopausal), endometrium, ovary, prostate (advanced/fatal), kidney, thyroid, multiple myeloma

Physical inactivity
- Colon, breast (post-menopausal), endometrium

Reproductive/hormonal
- Breastfeeding (< 12 months amongst Parous women, termed “insufficient”)
- Menopausal hormone therapy (MHT)
- Combined oral contraceptives (OCP)

Increases risk: breast, uterine cervix
Decreases risk: endometrium, ovary

Solar ultraviolet (UV) radiation
- Melanoma of the skin

Tobacco smoke
- Tobacco smoking
- Exposure to smoking by partner in home

Oral cavity and pharynx, oesophagus, stomach, colorectum, liver, pancreas, larynx, lung, uterine cervix, ovary (mucinous), kidney, bladder, acute myeloid leukaemia

*These are modifiable causes of cancer as determined by the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) and the World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF).

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO REVIEW THE ABSTRACT OF THE STUDY, PLEASE CLICK HERE
By far the biggest preventable cause of cancer deaths in Australia is tobacco smoke. Cancer caused by smoking and passive smoking killed 9,921 people in 2013 (23% of all cancer deaths).

Dietary factors caused 5% of cancer deaths. Poor diet was responsible for 2,329 deaths from cancer.

NOTE: Imagery is illustrative only and not to scale. Totals do not sum to 38% as some factors co-occur to cause cancer.
TIPS FOR STAYING HEALTHY AND REDUCING YOUR CANCER RISK

There are many ways that Australians can make lifestyle choices that promote their health and wellbeing and reduce their cancer risk.

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Australian Guidelines, and other government agencies, provide recommendations for healthy eating and lifestyle. Here are just a few to get you started.

Click the links to learn more.
According to the NHMRC, there is no level of drinking alcohol that can be guaranteed to be completely ‘safe’ or ‘no risk’. The NHMRC guidelines recommend no more than two standard drinks a day to help reduce the lifetime risk of harm from alcohol related disease or injury.

Read the Australian Guidelines
According to the Australian Dietary Guidelines, most Aussies get less fibre than they think. The Guidelines recommend consuming at least four to six serves of fibre per day (1 serve = 5g of fibre).

Read the Australian Guidelines

TOP TIPS FOR GETTING MORE FIBRE:
- Eat more fruit and veg.
- Swap meat or chicken for cooked or canned legumes or veggies.
- Swap white flour for wholemeal flour
- Add chopped nuts to dishes.

1 STANDARD SERVE SIZE EXAMPLES

4-6 SERVES /DAY

75-120g
Cooked rice, pasta, noodles, buckwheat or quinoa

40g
Bread, roll or flat bread

120g
Cooked porridge

30g
Wheat cereal flakes or muesli

*3-6 for women/ 4.5-6 for men
GET FRUITY

According to the Australian Dietary Guidelines, we should eat at least two serves of fruit per day.

Read the Australian Guidelines

TOP TIPS:
- Fruit is most nutritious when eaten fresh, whole and raw.
- Avoid high kilojoule dried fruit.
* Drink fruit juice only occasionally as it is acidic and less nutritious than whole fruit.

NOTE: Imagery is illustrative only and not to scale.
MUM WAS RIGHT, EAT YOUR VEGGIES

According to Australian Dietary Guidelines, adults should eat at least five serves of vegetables per day (75g per serve).

Read the Australian Guidelines

TOP TIP:
- Starchy vegetables like potato, cassava or sweet corn should only be part of your vegetable intake.
LEAN PROTEIN

According to the Australian Dietary Guidelines, adults should eat 2-3 serves per day of lean meat, poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts, seeds and legumes.

Read the Australian Guidelines

TOP TIP:
- Only eat processed meats and sausages occasionally and in small amounts.

*2-2.5 for women / 2.5-3 for men
MAINTAIN A HEALTHY WEIGHT

According to the Australian Department of Health, overweight is measured at a Body Mass Index (BMI) of 25 or more and obesity is determined at a BMI of 30 or more.

TOP TIPS FOR WEIGHT LOSS:
- Burn more kilojoules than you consume.
- Exercise is key. Get up and get moving.
- Stick to a healthy, well-rounded diet that covers off all of the major food groups.

Calculate your BMI

BMI is your weight (in kilograms) over your height squared (in centimetres).
GET MOVING

The more you move, the healthier you’ll be. According to the Australian Department of Health, adults under 64 years should aim for 150 to 300 minutes (2½ to 5 hours) of moderate intensity physical activity per week.

TOP TIPS:
- Any physical activity is better than none. So get up, start slowly and build up to the recommended amount.
- Don’t sit around for long periods of time.
- If you have to sit, get up every now and then to break things up.

Read the Department of Health Guidelines
STAY SUN SMART

Staying out of the sun can reduce your risk of developing melanoma of the skin. The more you go in the sun, the more you increase your chance of skin cancer.

DID YOU KNOW?
QIMR Berghofer is a world-leader in skin cancer prevention. With the help of our research, Australians are more sun smart than ever, with Australia being the only country in the world where melanoma rates have begun to fall overall.

BUT DON’T GET COMPLACENT!

TOP TIPS FROM CANCER COUNCIL AUSTRALIA:
- Skip the sun when the SunSmart UV index exceeds 3.
- Keep covered. Wear protective clothing, close-fitting sun glasses and a hat that covers your face, neck and ears.

Read how to reduce your risk of skin cancer
THANK YOU FOR NOT SMOKING

Smoking is a big no-no. If you stop smoking, or don’t start smoking, you reduce your risk of tobacco related health issues including cancer.

For more information on how to quit, visit QuitNow

IT’S NEVER TOO LATE TO QUIT SMOKING.
- Call the Quitline 13 78 48
- Sign up to QuitCoach, an online tool to help you quit smoking
- Download MyQuitBuddy, a mobile app to support your journey to becoming smoke-free.
- Use patches, gum or medication
- Quit cold turkey
- Try hypnotherapy or acupuncture

IF YOU ARE TRYING TO QUIT:
- Don’t switch to lower nicotine or tar: Weaker cigarettes won’t decrease your risk of smoking-related disease
- Don’t use filters or filter blockers
- Don’t use e-cigarettes or vaping
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

We would like to thank the following agencies that funded QIMR Berghofer’s research:

National Health and Medical Research Council (NHRC; Australia)
www.nhmrc.gov.au

Cancer Council Australia
www.cancer.org.au

If you would like additional information about cancer risk, and please contact Cancer Council Australia or Cancer Australia.

Cancer Council Australia
www.cancer.org.au

Cancer Australia
www.canceraustralia.gov.au

Information related to health guidelines has been sourced from the following agencies:

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
www.aihw.gov.au

Australian Government Department of Health
www.health.gov.au

Australian Government - Quit Now
www.quitnow.gov.au

Cancer Council Australia
www.canceraustralia.gov.au

National Health & Medical Research Council
www.nhmrc.gov.au

INTERESTED IN QIMR BERGHOFER’S RESEARCH?

To learn more about QIMR Berghofer’s research, or to book a tour of the Institute (these are free and open to all), please contact us at enquiries@qimrberghofer.edu.au or call 1800 993 000 or visit our website www.qimrberghofer.edu.au