
World Cancer Day: Highlighting Physical Activity in the Global Fight Against Cancer



Worldwide cases of cancer predicted to reach 21.7 million by 2030

Today, on World Cancer Day, millions are urged to get active to help combat the world's most deadly disease. Under the banner 'We can. I can.' the day will encourage people to be more active - in every sense - in the fight against a disease that, in less than two decades, will directly affect up to 21.7 million people per year.

To help spread this message, World Cancer Day is harnessing the power of sport by encouraging sports fans, organisations and personalities to use their voice and reach through the 'Support through Sport' initiative.

Dr Cary Adams, Chief Executive Officer, Union for International Cancer Control (UICC): *"This World Cancer Day we want to inspire individuals to play an active role in the fight against cancer, by being physically active. Around a third of all cancers are preventable through lifestyle changes, such as increasing physical activity and leading a less sedentary lifestyle. A large number of people also find exercise to be of great benefit to their wellbeing either during or after treatment. The 'We can. I can.' campaign is in its second year and we hope to build on the success of last year and spread the message further than ever."*

Aside from prevention, a growing body of evidence [2] shows that physical activity significantly helps cancer patients, not only to manage the life-altering side-effects of treatment such as fatigue, depression and heart damage, but also in reducing the risk of the disease worsening or recurring. Research shows, for example, that a breast cancer patient's risk of recurrence and of dying from the disease can be reduced by around 40 per cent by doing recommended levels of physical activity[3].

Professor Sanchia Aranda, UICC President: *"Anyone can get involved in sport, so it's a great fit for World Cancer Day. Regular exercise is one of the most simple and fun ways that people worldwide can reduce their cancer risk. The messages around sport also link back to our cancer messages about the importance of healthy eating, supporting one another to achieve common goals and working together."*

"In Australia, the Australia Cancer Council is the official charity partner for the Sydney 7s tournament, being held over the World Cancer Day weekend. The event is part of the international HSBC World Rugby Sevens Series and brings people from around the world. As well as fundraising at the tournament, we will be using it as an opportunity to educate spectators about how they can cut their cancer risk."

'We can. I can.' make a difference: just as everyone can play a crucial role in maintaining their own health and wellbeing - by being active, limiting alcohol consumption, avoiding tobacco, and moderating red and processed meat consumption - everyone can also contribute to the success of World Cancer Day: every

Reference:

[1] GLOBOCAN 2012 (IARC), Cancer Incidence, Mortality and Prevalence Worldwide, Lyon, France, International Agency for Research on Cancer, available at: http://globocan.iarc.fr/old/burden.asp?selection_pop=224900&Text-p=World&selection_cancer=290&Text-c=All+cancers+excl.+non-melanoma+skin+cancer&pYear=18&type=0&window=1&submit=%C2%A0Execute [Accessed 24/01/2017]

[2] Macmillan Cancer Support (2011) The importance of physical activity for people living with and beyond cancer: A concise evidence review, available at: <http://www.macmillan.org.uk/documents/aboutus/commissioners/physicalactivityevidencereview.pdf> [Accessed 12/01/2017], see pages 2, 6 and 7

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[3] Macmillan Cancer Support (2011) The importance of physical activity for people living with and beyond cancer: A concise evidence review, available at: <http://www.macmillan.org.uk/documents/aboutus/commissioners/physicalactivityevidencereview.pdf> [Accessed 12/01/2017], see page 8

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