

What's your Game Plan?



Backgrounder: Breast, colorectal and cervical cancer

Cancer is the leading causes of death in Canada. Every day, on average, 480 people will be diagnosed and 205 will die from cancer. Each day in BC, 28 women will be diagnosed with cancer and 11 will not survive.

What is the Women's Health *What's Your Game Plan?* campaign all about?

We are sharing a message to women to be aware of three cancers (colorectal, breast and cervical) and that women need a Game Plan to defend themselves, family members and friends against these cancers.

Why is this campaign important? Why are you reaching out to women?

Here are some statistics:

- Cancer risk increases with age
- About 40 per cent of all new cancers in women can be attributed to breast, colorectal and cervical cancer
- In 2011, it is estimated that 10,200 BC women will be diagnosed with cancer and 4,300 will die
 - 2,800 will be diagnosed with breast cancer, 600 will die
 - 1,150 will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer, 510 will die
 - 160 women will be diagnosed with cervical cancer and 45 will die.
- Although not featured in this campaign, lung cancer is the second most common cancer in women and will kill 1,250 in BC this year.

Why do women need a "Game Plan"?

The Canadian Cancer Society encourages women to get a Game Plan:

- Know your body
- Check your family history
- Get screened and help find cancer early
- Make healthy choices

What should women know?

Colorectal cancer can be treated successfully at an early stage. It is most common in people over 50 but can appear earlier.

Colorectal cancer Game Plan:

- A diet high in red meat, alcohol consumption, smoking, physical inactivity, obesity and being over 50 are risk factors
- May not cause any signs or symptoms in its early stages
- Screening saves lives. If you are 50 or older, have a stool test at least every two years
- Watch for abdominal discomfort, a change in bowel habits, blood in the stool

Breast cancer is the most common cancer in women. Being a woman and getting older are the biggest risk factors.

Breast cancer Game Plan:

- If you are over 40, talk to your doctor about the risks.
- If you are 50-69 have a mammography every two years
- If you are 70 or older talk to your doctor about how often you should have a mammogram
- Whatever your age, know what is normal for your breasts.
- Hormone replacement therapy can increase the risk

The main risk factor for developing **cervical cancer** is infection with human papillomavirus (HPV).

Cervical cancer Game Plan:

- After you become sexually active, start having a regular PAP test by the time you are 21
- Once you become sexually active you should have a Pap test every 1 to 3 years
- To reduce your risk of HPV infection have as few sexual partners as possible and use a condom. Condoms don't remove all risk but they help if used before skin to skin sexual contact.
- Two HPV vaccines are available that protect against several types of the virus.
- Even if you get the HPV vaccine you still need to get regular Pap tests.

For more information or to enter our online contest to win an ipad visit www.cancergameplan.ca.