

It's time to be clear on cancer

4 February is World Cancer Day. Half of us will get cancer in our lifetime. But a third of cancer cases are detected when it's an emergency¹ – much too late.

This year's World Cancer Day theme is about closing the cancer care gap. This means removing the barriers that limit your health potential. A good place to start is through better education around cancer prevention.

It's not always easy to talk about cancer, but knowing what to look out for, checking regularly and acting quickly can help secure the best possible outcome.

Spotting the signs and symptoms

Cancer symptoms vary depending on the type of cancer. But there are certain symptoms to look out for, such as:

- a new lump in any area of the body, for example a breast lump or testicular lump
- unusual bleeding, such as in urine, vomit, or stools, and vaginal bleeding between periods or after sex
- unexplained weight loss
- fatigue
- a mole that has changed shape or looks uneven
- heavy night sweats or fevers
- a change in bowel habits

Symptoms can differ between people, and symptoms like these can also be caused by other medical conditions. But diagnosing cancer early can make a big difference to how well it can be treated. If you ever notice any symptoms like these, or an unusual change that doesn't go away, speak to your GP. It's likely nothing to worry about, but it's always worth a check.

Reducing your risk

It isn't always known why one person gets cancer while someone else does not. But making some lifestyle changes can significantly [reduce your risk of developing cancer](#), for example:

- [quitting smoking](#)
- [exercising regularly](#)
- [eating healthily](#)

Where to get support

Bupa has a range of services to get you the help you need and fast. If you're worried about cancer symptoms, there's no need to see a GP first². Check with <HR representative> to see what's available to you. You might also be able to access our employee assistance programme if you need support.

You can find more information about cancer types, symptoms and treatment on [Bupa's cancer pages](#). You can also access information and support at [Macmillan](#) and [Cancer Research](#). If you're a people manager, [this guide can help support you with having conversations about cancer](#).

¹University College London, 2022. Accessed Jan 2024.

² Any onward referrals for consultations, tests or treatment are subject to the benefits and exclusions of your cover. For example, if your cover excludes conditions you had before your cover started, we may ask for further information from your GP. Please check your guide and certificate for further details or contact us to check your eligibility.