

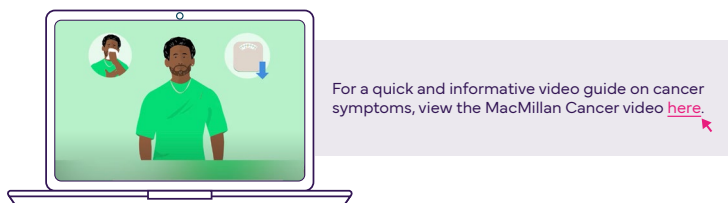
Female Cancer Awareness

Know the Signs, Reduce Your Risk & Take Action

Cancer is a significant health concern for women in the UK, with certain types being more prevalent. "In the UK, around 360,000 people are diagnosed with cancer every year. For most cancers, treatment is more likely to be effective if the cancer is found early." Understanding the risks, recognising early symptoms, and making healthy lifestyle choices can help lower your chances of developing cancer.

Common cancers

- **Breast cancer:** Symptoms include lumps, nipple discharge, or changes in breast shape or texture.
- **Cervical cancer:** Often linked to HPV, symptoms include unusual bleeding and pelvic pain.
- **Ovarian cancer:** Over half of ovarian cancers develop in women over 65, with symptoms such as bloating and stomach pain.
- **Lung cancer:** Affects both smokers and non-smokers; symptoms include persistent coughing and breathlessness.
- **Skin cancer:** The risk increases with sun exposure. Watch for changes in moles, sores that don't heal, and unusual skin growths.
- **Bowel cancer:** Look out for persistent changes in bowel habits and unexplained weight loss.



However, if you notice any unusual changes in your body, **speak to your GP as soon as possible**.

How to reduce your cancer risk

While some risk factors (such as age and genetics) are beyond our control, lifestyle choices can play a huge role in cancer prevention. Here are some key steps to protect your health:



Maintain a healthy weight

Obesity increases the risk of various cancers.



Eat a balanced diet

Include plenty of fruit, vegetables, and fibre while reducing processed foods.



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Stay hydrated

Drinking plenty of water supports overall health.



Prioritise sleep

Good sleep is essential for a strong immune system.



Limit alcohol consumption

Stick to recommended limits to lower cancer risk.



Avoid smoking

One of the biggest cancer risk factors; quitting significantly improves your health.



Stay active

Aim for at least 150 minutes of exercise per week.



Attend routine screenings

Regular cervical and breast screenings can detect cancer early.



Protect yourself from UV exposure

The biggest way to reduce your risk of skin cancer is to wear high SPF suncream, stay in the shade, especially during peak sun hours, avoid tanning beds, and wear protective clothing, including hats and sunglasses.

How can you make a difference?

There are lots of ways you can get involved with local or national initiatives to help raise awareness and support cancer research.

- [NHS Blood Donation](#)
- [Breast Cancer Now](#)
- [Ovarian Cancer Action](#)
- [Cancer Research UK](#)

Sources:

- <https://www.macmillan.org.uk/cancer-information-and-support/stories-and-media/videos/signs-and-symptoms-animations>

