

# World Cancer Day



World Cancer Day is observed on the 4th of February each year and aims to promote worldwide awareness and education about cancer, inspiring people and governments to act against cancer. It also aims to promote access to life-saving cancer treatments and ensure that care is equal and accessible for all.

## What's this Year's Theme?

2022 Campaign Theme: Close the care gap/Realising the problem

## What is cancer?

Cancer is a disease that is characterised by the growth of uncontrollably dividing abnormal cells that can infiltrate and destroy normal body tissue and spread throughout the body. Around 10 million people die from cancer every year, and analysts estimate that cancer deaths will increase to 13 million by 2030.



## Common signs and symptoms of cancer

Most signs and symptoms are not caused by cancer but can be caused by other factors. Here are some of the more common signs and symptoms that may be caused by cancer. However, any of these can be caused by other health issues as well:



- Fatigue or extreme tiredness that doesn't get better with rest.
- Weight loss or gain of 10 pounds (4.5kg) or more for an unknown reason.
- Eating problems such as not feeling hungry, trouble swallowing, stomach-ache, nausea and/or vomiting.
- Swelling or lumps anywhere on the body.
- Thickening or lump in the breast or other part of the body.
- Pain, especially new or with unknown reasons, that doesn't go away or gets worse.
- Skin changes such as a lump that bleeds or turns scaly, a new mole or a change in a mole, a sore that does not heal, or yellowish colour of the skin or eyes (jaundice).
- Cough or hoarseness that does not go away.
- Unusual bleeding or bruising for an unknown reason.
- Change in bowel habits, such as constipation or diarrhoea, that doesn't go away or a change in how your stool looks.
- Bladder changes such as pain when passing urine, blood in the urine or needing to pass urine often.
- Fever or night sweats
- Headaches
- Vision or hearing problems
- Mouth issues such as sores, bleeding, pain or numbness.

## What can we do?

Increased understanding and reliable knowledge and information will help all of us identify early warning signs and make better health decisions. Increased understanding will also help us separate our cancer fears from the myths.ues as well:



## As individuals, we can take responsibility by:

- **Knowing our body:** Many cancers may display signs like breast, cervical, colorectal, skin, dental and some childhood cancers. It is important to know your body because it is easier to treat or even cure cancer if detected early.
- **Screening:** Even if there are no signs or symptoms of cancer, screening may monitor for signs of development for some types of cancer, for example, bowel, breast, cervical, colorectal and lung. A recent study in the UK showed that when diagnosed early, survival is three times higher.
- **Maintaining a healthy weight and becoming physically active** will help avoid at least one-third of common cancers.
- **Avoiding tobacco, alcohol, and excessive/prolonged sun exposure.** It has been found that tobacco can cause 15 different forms of cancer, including dental, lung, liver, stomach, intestinal and ovarian cancers, as well as certain types of leukaemia (cancers of the blood). Quitting can make an enormous difference at any age, increasing life expectancy and enhancing the quality of life.
- **Getting vaccinated** and encouraging others to get vaccinated.

## Daman - Cancer Awareness

Daman continuously partners with regulatory authorities and Abu Dhabi Public Health to promote cancer screening and awareness sessions among its members.



In 2021 Daman held an on-site Cancer Awareness Session for different key clients for 163 members, including a weekly session on Microsoft Teams each Tuesday during October. Cancer Awareness Webinar held for Abu Dhabi and Dubai clients with 217 attendees. On-site Cancer Awareness Caravan in Abu Dhabi that served 35 members.

The following Services Clinic types were offered virtually in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, according to DOH regulations for Daman Key Clients employee:

- Educational session by a physician, covering the signs, symptoms and risk factors.
- Health education workshops about breast cancer and the importance of early detection.
- Monthly self-examinations.

In 2018 and 2019 cancer awareness campaigns, 1,111 members benefited from Breast Cancer Awareness presentations, screenings with full medical equipment and services. We offered the below:

- Educational session by a physician, covering signs, symptoms and risk factors.
- Health education workshops about breast cancer and the importance of early detection.
- Clinical Breast Examinations performed by a Doctor.
- Mammogram screening voucher.
- Screening offered to 30-40 women per day.
- Onsite screenings (3D mammogram, ultrasound and clinical breast examination) increasing the chances of early detection and survival.
- Awareness lecture about breast cancer and the importance of early detection for 45 - 60 minutes, covering signs, symptoms and risk factors.



In 2018, Daman worked closely with ADPHC in an intensive programme aimed at increasing the uptake of screening tests among the Thiqa population.

We selected a total of 15,000 members who are eligible for cancer screening, 5,000 for each cancer type (breast, cervical, colorectal), ensuring different members in each group.

We divided each category into two:

- The first group gets an SMS only.
- The second group gets both the SMS and a follow-up call as well.

5,000 SMS was sent to the eligible group for each cancer type.

86-100% follow up call trials were completed.

40% average answered calls from total trials.

15% of the members confirmed the screening.

85% of the members declined the screening.

This was very successful as it led to an increase in the number of tests as below within a period of three months:

3.2% for cervical screening uptake  
2.7% for breast screening uptake  
2.8% for colorectal screening uptake