

CANCER FACTS & STATS

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Together,
all of our
actions
matter

February 4th, 2021 marks the **21st World Cancer Day**; a global initiative led by the Union for International Cancer Control to raise awareness and education about prevention, early detection, and treatment of cancer. This year's theme "*I Am and I Will*" symbolizes the significance of all of our collective actions, whether big or small, towards a cancer-free world. As of this writing, there are 594 activities currently planned worldwide (<https://www.worldcancerday.org/map-activities#>) including, among others, landmark lightings, awareness raising events, fundraising events, conference workshops, as well as counselling and support activities, with several compelled to adapt to the current landscape of virtual events brought by an extraordinary 2020.

There is indeed a lot to celebrate on this day, from the advances that have been made in cancer prevention and treatment to our continued commitment to translate the knowledge gained through research to those affected by cancer in one way or another. Notwithstanding, lung, prostate, colorectal, stomach, and liver cancer remain the most common cancer types in men, whereas breast, colorectal, lung, cervical, and thyroid cancer are the most common among women (<https://www.who.int/health-topics/cancer>). Cancer continues to be one of the leading causes of death worldwide (<https://gco.iarc.fr>), when many of these deaths could have been avoided. In simple terms, about one third of cancers could be prevented by healthy lifestyle choices such as avoiding smoking and public health measures such as immunization with the human papillomavirus vaccine (prevents cervical cancer and cancers of the vagina, vulva, anus, and oropharynx) and the hepatitis B vaccine (prevents liver cancer). The Canadian Cancer Society (<https://www.cancer.ca>) estimates that about 1 in 2 Canadians will develop cancer in their lifetimes and 1 in 4 will die of cancer, with lung, breast, colorectal, and prostate cancer being the most commonly diagnosed cancer types in Canada.

After all, "*where there's a will there's a way*". Political leaders, governments, and the public joined forces all around the world to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, which makes it now so much more possible than ever to strive for a common, global agenda and commitment to overcome cancer.

Just ask yourself what you want next year's theme on February 4th to be all about.