

Australia's Biggest Morning Tea

The Health Column

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One of Australia's most popular fund raising events is the Cancer Council's Biggest Morning Tea which will be held on 28 May 2015. This fun event helps the Cancer Council to raise vital funds for cancer prevention, research and support services.

According to the Cancer Council, cancer is a destructive disease that attacks the body's cells, organs, and tissues – things which are the basic building blocks of life. Cancer does not discriminate – it affects people of all ages and genders across the world.



The World Cancer Report, produced by the World Health Organization, found that in 2011 cancer surpassed heart disease as the world's biggest killer, with 7.87 million cancer deaths compared to 7.02 million from heart disease. 1 in 2 Australian men and 1 in 3 Australian women will be diagnosed with cancer by the age of 85.

Experts forecast cancer rates increasing by three-quarters over the next two decades, and they expect 20 million new cases globally by 2025.

The Cancer Council's statistics reflect those of the global WHO study. The Council says an estimated 124,910 new cases of cancer will be diagnosed in Australia this year, with that number set to rise to 150,000 by 2020.

The most common cancers in Australia (excluding non-melanoma skin cancer) are prostate, bowel, breast, melanoma and lung cancer. These five cancers account for over 60% of all cancers diagnosed in Australia.

Perhaps because we love the outdoors so much, more than 434,000 people are treated for one or more non-melanoma skin cancers each year.

But the news is not all bad. Research and medical breakthroughs have lifted the survival rate so that today more than 60% of people diagnosed with cancer in Australia will survive more than five years after diagnosis. The survival rate for many common cancers has increased by 30% in the past two decades.

The World Cancer Report says 3.7 million cancer deaths could have been avoided by lifestyle changes, such as quitting smoking, reducing alcohol intake and maintaining a healthy weight. According to the Cancer Council there are five key steps to cancer prevention:

- Quit smoking.
- Protect your skin from the sun.
- Maintain a healthy weight and diet.
- Maintain a regular exercise plan.
- Reduce your alcohol intake.

Screening and checks are another vital step in cancer prevention and treatment. Talk to your local pharmacist or doctor about what screening services are available to you. Your trusted health professional can also advise on self-examination including breasts and skin. If you notice any unusual symptoms or changes in your body, have them investigated immediately.

If you are living with cancer, your local pharmacy can help too. Recent budget announcements will see funding for new cancer drugs on the Pharmaceutical Benefit Scheme (PBS). One of the key aspects to managing mental cancer is medicine management. Pharmacists are medicines experts and can assist you with understanding how your medicines work and any possible side effects.

Pharmacies also offer services which can help people living with cancer maintain their independence and improve their quality of life. For example, home delivery and medication management services such as dose administration aids. Visit your local pharmacy during Australia's Biggest Morning Tea and find out how they can help.

Since 1993 people all over Australia have gathered in living rooms, community centres, schools, and workplaces to celebrate Australia's Biggest Morning Tea. The event has grown so that more than a million people each year take part. To become part of the event go to www.biggestmorningtea.com.au. The funds raised go to this very worthy cause which affects so many Australians.

You can get more advice and information about cancer from the Self Care Fact Cards titled *Sense in the sun* and *Breast Awareness and Pap Smear* found in pharmacies providing the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia's Self Care health information.

In addition, you can get more information on cancer prevention from the Self Care Fact Cards titled *Alcohol, Weight and health*, *Fibre and bowel health*, and *Staying a non-smoker*.

For the nearest Self Care pharmacy location phone the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia on 1300 369 772, or go to www.psa.org.au 'Supporting practice' then 'Self Care', and then 'Find a Self Care pharmacy'.