

# Show you care about beating cancer

## *The Health Column*

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Over time, the daffodil flower has been regarded as a symbol of rebirth – a sign of the new beginnings that come with spring.

The Cancer Council of Australia ([www.cancer.org.au](http://www.cancer.org.au)) chose the daffodil as a sign of new life and hope that a cure for cancer will be found. This Daffodil Day, 28 August 2015, will see a major fundraiser for the Cancer Council of Australia with the theme of 'Show you care about beating cancer.' Every daffodil and every donation grows hope – hope for better treatments, hope for more survivors, and hope for a cancer-free future.



Every day in Australia, about 300 people are told they have a life-threatening cancer. The Cancer 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. One in two Australian men and one in three Australian women will be diagnosed with cancer by the age of 85.

The good news is that while cancer is on the increase, death rates are falling and today more than 50 per cent of all cancers can be successfully treated. The survival rate for many common cancers has increased by 30% in the past two decades. However, there is still a long way to go, and Daffodil Day is one way of raising the funds that are needed to further increase the survival rate from cancers.

In Australia the most common cancers (excluding non-melanoma skin cancers) are prostate, colorectal (bowel), breast, melanoma and lung cancer.

The Cancer Council estimates that each year in Australia more than 6,000 deaths from cancer can be attributed to three major risk factors – inadequate intake of fruit and vegetables, inadequate physical activity, and being overweight and obese.

Tobacco is also a major cause of preventable disease. While Australia has been a world leader in tobacco control, thousands of people are still dying prematurely as a result of active and passive smoking.

Research highlights the need for behavioural and lifestyle changes as the key to cancer prevention. Developments and improved treatments for cancer have greatly improved health

outcomes, but effective prevention strategies are the key to further improving these outcomes. Research shows that once cancer is diagnosed, modification of diet or the use of dietary supplements (such as vitamins or antioxidants) does not seem to alter the course of the disease.

Your local pharmacy is your health destination. You can get advice on ways to keep healthy and preventing diseases like cancer, including services for weight management and quitting smoking. Your local pharmacy can also provide you with products to help prevent cancer, including sun protection and nicotine replacement therapy.

This Daffodil Day (28 August 2015), visit your local pharmacy and ask your pharmacist about your risk of cancer and what you can do to prevent cancer. Some sensible, and often quite simple, lifestyle changes can make a huge difference to your health. You may even be able to show you care about beating cancer by purchasing a Cancer Council of Australia daffodil or merchandise.

You can get more detailed information on cancer from the Self Care Fact Card titled *Weight and health*, *Staying a non-smoker*, *Sense in the sun*, and *Nicotine replacement therapy* providing the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia's Self Care health information.

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