

## **Cancer after age 50**

Most cancers occur in people over age 50. Cancers can occur before age 50 too. If cancers are not discovered until they spread to other parts of the body, treatment is less successful. Even if you have a medical checkup every year, be alert for signs of cancer between checkups.

### **Cancer of the lung**

Cancer of the lung affects men and women, mostly after age 50. Most people who get lung cancer are or were cigarette smokers. Quitting reduces your risk for lung cancer.

- Never ignore a persistent cough or coughing up blood. Tell your health care provider about it.
- If you smoke, quit. Talk to your provider if you need help quitting.

### **Cancer of the colon and rectum**

Cancers of the colon and rectum usually occur after age 40. A family history of this cancer or certain bowel problems increase your risk for cancer of the colon or rectum.

- Ask your health care provider about testing your stool for blood each year.
- Ask your provider about a sigmoidoscope or colonoscope examination every 5 years.
- Tell your provider about any change in your bowel habits or change in the way your stool looks.

### **Skin cancer**

Most skin cancers appear after age 50. Exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation, usually from strong sunshine, appears to increase the risk for skin cancers.

- Cover up or apply sunscreen when you are out in strong sunshine.
- Take advantage of any skin cancer screening programs in your area.
- Check your skin regularly for lumps or areas that change in size, shape, or color.

### **Women's cancers**

Breast cancer affects one woman in eight. Cancers found early have the best long-term recovery prospects. Three out of four breast cancers occur in women over age 50. Cancer of the uterus occurs mainly between ages 55 and 70. Cancer of the cervix is more common in younger women. Cancer of the ovary occurs mostly in women over 50.

- Do a monthly breast self-examination (BSE). Look for a lump or other changes.
- Tell your health care provider if you notice a lump or change in your breast.
- Have a screening mammogram as often as your provider recommends.
- Have a regular medical checkup including a pelvic examination and Pap test.
- Tell your provider about any vaginal discharge or unusual vaginal bleeding.

## **Men's cancers**

Cancer of the prostate mostly affects men over age 55. Cancer of the testis affects mainly young and middle-aged men.

- Have an annual physical checkup that includes a rectal examination.
- Take advantage of the PSA screening test for prostate cancer.
- Do a monthly testicular self-examination (TSE). Look for a lump or other changes.
- Tell your health care provider if you notice a lump or change in your testicles or scrotum.