



More than half of all countries worldwide are struggling to prevent cancer and provide treatment and chronic care to cancer patients, warns a recent WHO survey for World Cancer Day. This means, currently many of these countries do not have a functional cancer control plan that includes prevention, early detection, treatment and care. There is an urgent need to help countries to reduce cancer deaths and provide appropriate long-term treatment and care to avoid human suffering and protect countries' social and economic development.

Cancer is a leading cause of death worldwide. 7.6 million people died from cancer worldwide in 2008 and every year almost 13 million cancer cases are newly diagnosed. Already more than two-thirds of these new cancer cases and deaths occur in developing countries where cancer incidence continues to increase at alarming rates. Research suggests that currently a third of all cancer deaths are due to modifiable risks including tobacco use, obesity, harmful use of alcohol and infections. If detected early many types of cancer such as breast cancer, cervical cancer and colorectal cancer can be successfully cured.

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"Cancer should not be a death sentence anywhere in the world as there are proven ways to prevent and cure many cancers," says Dr Oleg Chestnov, WHO Assistant Director-General for

Noncommunicable Diseases and Mental Health. "In order to reduce exposure to risk factors leading to cancer and ensure that every person living with cancer gets access to appropriate care and treatment, comprehensive cancer control programmes need to be set up in every country."

[Read more on the Survey...](#)

### World Cancer Day

World Cancer Day (4 February) is an annual event initiated by the Union for International Cancer Control that calls on people, organizations and government agencies around the world to unite in the fight against the global cancer epidemic. This year, the campaign focuses on improving general knowledge around cancer and dispelling misconceptions about the disease.

### Additional links:

- [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#)
- [International Agency for Research on Cancer \(IARC\)](#)
- [Union for International Cancer Control](#)