

Chronic Disease Prevention Bulletin

April 2006

Distributed by: Southeast Health District,
1115-B Church Street, Waycross, GA 31501



Staying Positive In A Cancer Filled World

Cancer is one of the most frightening diseases known to man. It is the second leading cause of death, and it can overcome people quickly or slowly. In the United States, half of all men and one third of all women will develop cancer during their lifetimes. Types of cancer include lung, breast, colorectal, bladder, brain, cervical, leukemia, pancreas, bone, liver, kidney, skin, and the list goes on.

Simply stated, cancer occurs when abnormal cells grow out-of-control. It is normal for cells to grow, divide, and die. It is when the process becomes out-of-control that cancer cells develop. You may be asking what causes this process to become out-of-control. Every cell in your body has DNA. DNA directs the activities of the cell. When this DNA becomes damaged and the body is unable to repair itself, abnormal cell growth begins. Some people are born with damaged DNA, but other people's DNA becomes damaged by environmental factors such as secondhand smoke or asbestos exposure. One type of cancer that can result from these substances is lung cancer; however, many times the reason for developing cancer, even lung cancer, is unknown.



One such story that is fresh on people's minds is the heart-wrenching story of Dana Reeves, wife of the late Christopher Reeves. She died at the age of 44 from lung cancer. We will never know what caused her lung cancer, but this story reminds us that no one is immune to cancer. It can affect anyone.

The type of cancer a person has is determined by where the cancer started. For instance, a person may have cancer in the breast, but it spread, a process called metastasis, to the liver. This cancer is still called breast cancer because that is the area of the body it originated.

No doubt, we want to prevent cancer from ever occurring. We increase our chance of being cancer free by doing the following things: eat healthy, be active, be smoke-free, get checked, and be positive. These five elements are also crucial if you were to develop cancer.

I would like to expound on being positive for a minute, particularly on the topic of humor therapy. Humor can help relieve physical and emotional pain as well as relieve stress. Humor stimulates the circulatory and immune system. Watch a funny movie or show, read

cartoons, do something unpredictable, find humor in every day living such as dogs playing, squirrels chasing each other around a tree, or a baby squealing at the "top of her lungs" as you sing your favorite hymn at church. There's humor all around us if we take time to see or hear it.

Cancer is a serious disease, but that does not mean we have to lose our sense of humor. This month as we observe Cancer Control Month, if you know someone that has cancer, give them something to laugh about.

Source: www.cnn.com/2006/SHOWBIZ/03/07/reeve.obit/

www.cancer.org

What Cancer Cannot Do

Cancer is so limited-
It cannot cripple love
It cannot shatter hope
It cannot corrode faith
It cannot destroy peace
It cannot kill friendships
It cannot suppress memories
It cannot silence courage
It cannot invade the soul
It cannot steal eternal life
It cannot conquer the spirit.
~*~Source Unknown~*~

Kick Butts Day on April 5, 2006

Every year on Kick Butts Day (KBD), America's youth STAND OUT...SPEAK UP...and SEIZE CONTROL in the fight against tobacco use. It's that time again as youth groups, in conjunction with the district staff and Tobacco Use Prevention Programs at DHR, work to ensure youth do not become victimized by tobacco industry targeting.

This year, youth across the state will embark upon initiatives to encourage their schools to adopt a 100% tobacco free policy. This will include educating their peers, parents and school boards on the hazards of tobacco use and secondhand smoke. The new 2006 KBD activity guide and CD-ROM are now available on line. Each day about 1200 Americans die from tobacco use and second hand smoke. That's about one person every 74 seconds. Youth in Georgia are working to make a difference. Join the youth in your community and advocate for a healthier Georgia.

Source: <http://kickbuttsday.org/>

