

Cancer: Show your care, be aware

World Cancer Day (WCD) is observed every year on February 4. The objective of the Cancer Day is to save millions of cancer victims and educate the public about the cancer symptoms, preventive measures, and risk of epidemic disease. Raising awareness about healthy diet, physical activity, and environmental carcinogens is also a major part of the cancer day awareness. Hence, celebrating World Cancer Day signifies the effort by United Nations/ WHO, to unite the world and devise strategies in the fight against cancer and also disseminate the facts about the epidemic disease, treatments, and preventive measures among public.

The cancer threat looms large killing millions and so World Cancer Day is the right time to start preventive measures. The impact of cancer on all population is devastating but especially for poor vulnerable and socially disadvantaged people who get sicker and die sooner as a result of this dreaded disease.

It should be our aim to propagate that proper diet, exercise, and maintaining proper healthy body weight that could prevent about one-third of the World's most common cancers. Programs aimed at reducing tobacco use can curb about 71% of all lung and oral cancers death and at least 22% deaths from other cancers. Besides challenges, reducing chronic infection such as hepatitis B and human papillomavirus (HPV) through vaccines should be initiated in National Cancers Control Programs.

The latest diagnostic tools, precision radiation methods, surgical options, and targeted therapies have brought about this dramatic change. Target therapy in particular is the biggest discovery in this field. It involves identification of the molecule responsible for a particular type of cancer and administration of drugs to control it.

Again it is sad to know that cancer is a leading cause of death worldwide and accounted for 7.6 million deaths (around 13%



of all deaths) in 2008. As per WHO, the report reveals that each year more than 12.7 million people undergo cancer diagnosis and over 7 million people die of cancer. India continues to report the highest prevalence of cancer globally with 75000 to 80000 new cases of such cancers reported every year. Most of this type of cancer can be attributed to the use of chewing tobacco as more Indians chew tobacco than smoke it.

India has 14% smoking tobacco users and 26% chewing tobacco users, compared globally, indicating that the use of chewing tobacco remains one of the single biggest challenges for health professionals. A recent report prepared by the experts of National Institute of Health and Family Welfare to study the harmful effects of gutka specified clearly that India alone accounts for 80% of the total oral cancer figures across the world.

Also a myth "that cancer is a death sentence." For World Cancer Day we health officials must convince people that many cancers that were once considered incurable can now be treated effectively or can be cured. It is the prime responsibility rather bounden duty of all of us to dispel the myth that "Cancer is my Fate" putting spotlight on prevention.

Prof. S. G. Damle



*Editor in-Chief, Contemporary Clinical Dentistry, India
E-mail: editorccd@gmail.com*

Access this article online	
Quick Response Code:	Website: www.contemplindent.org
	DOI: 10.4103/0976-237X.107417

How to cite this article: Damle SG. Cancer: Show your care, be aware. Contemp Clin Dent 2012;3:379.