

World Cancer Day

4th February 2014



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On behalf of the editorial board of Basic and Clinical Cancer Research

In 2013, WHO launched the Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases 2013-2020. The action plan provides a road map and a menu of policy options for all Member States and other stakeholders, to take coordinated and coherent action, at all levels, local to global, to attain the nine voluntary global targets, including that of a 25% relative reduction in premature mortality from cardiovascular diseases, cancer, diabetes or chronic respiratory diseases by 2025. The main focus of this action plan is on four types of NCDs (cardiovascular diseases, cancer, chronic respiratory diseases and diabetes) which make the largest contribution to morbidity and mortality due to NCDs, and on four shared behavioral risk factors including tobacco use, unhealthy diet, physical inactivity and harmful use of alcohol. It recognizes that the conditions in which people live and work and their lifestyles influence their health and quality of life. Some of the voluntary targets are most relevant for cancer prevention, including target 5 aimed at reducing the prevalence of tobacco use by 30%.

World Cancer Day is celebrated to promote awareness about the fight against cancer and educate people suffering from its pain that it is a curable disease. Prevention, early detection, treatment and care open up to the exciting prospect that we can impact the global cancer burden - for the better. Building on the success of last year's campaign, World Cancer Day 2014 will focus on Target 5 of the World Cancer Declaration Reduce stigma and dispel myths about cancer, under the tagline "Debunk the myths". There are still so many myths about the disease out there and this Day is the perfect opportunity for people to dispel them. Greater awareness and education about cancer can lead to positive change at an individual, community and policy level and across the continuum of cancer care. For World Cancer Day 2014 we will focus on four key myths and go about 'debunking' them through the various materials we are producing. These myths are:

- 1- We don't need to talk about cancer;
- 2- Cancer...there are no signs and symptoms;
- 3- There is nothing I can do about cancer;
- 4- I don't have the right to cancer care.

References:

1. de Martel C, Ferlay J, Franceschi S, et al. Global burden of cancers attributable to infections in 2008: a review and synthetic analysis. *The Lancet Oncology* 2012;13: 607-615.
2. World Health Organization: Global Action Plan for the Prevention and Control of Noncommunicable Diseases 2013–2020. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2013.