SINGAPORE CANCER SOCIETY

How Are You MANaging?

Understanding Lung, Colorectal, Prostate and Testicular Cancers

Table of Contents

Introduction

Men are at risk for several cancers, particularly **lung, prostate, colorectal, and testicular cancer.**

Lung cancer, strongly linked to smoking, remains one of the deadliest if not caught early.

Colorectal cancer is often preventable through regular screenings and healthy lifestyle habits.

Prostate cancer, common in older men, can develop silently without clear symptoms.

Although less common, testicular cancer mainly affects younger men and is highly treatable when detected early.

Being aware of warning signs, undergoing regular screenings, and knowing your personal risk factors are essential steps in safeguarding your health.

Prevention Tips

Cancer Screenings

Why should I go for regular cancer screenings?

Early detection of cancer is crucial for maintaining your health because most early cancers do not cause any symptoms.

You might feel completely fine, yet cancer could be developing silently. This is why regular screening is important even when you feel healthy.

Catching cancer early offers several benefits: treatments tend to be simpler, less invasive, and come with fewer side effects.
Early-stage treatment often means less surgery, fewer medications, and faster recovery.

Most importantly, early detection greatly improves your chances of survival. Many cancers can be cured if found early. The sooner you know, the more treatment options you have and the better your chances of beating cancer.

Regular screenings help detect cancer when it is still small and has not spread, making treatment easier and more effective. Taking proactive steps through regular screenings is one of the best ways to protect your health.

Prevention Tips

Lifestyle Modification

How should I reduce the risk of cancer through lifestyle changes?

1. Healthy Diet: Eat plenty of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Include foods rich in antioxidants like lycopenes (found in watermelon and tomatoes) and polyphenols (such as broccoli and green tea). Limit red and processed meat to reduce cancer risk.
2. Active Lifestyle: Maintain a healthy weight by aiming for at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise each week. Avoid or limit alcohol intake to two drinks per day for men, and avoid smoking or vaping.
3. Regular Screenings: Early detection saves lives. Go for regular cancer screenings to catch any issues early when treatment is most effective.

By adopting these habits, you can significantly reduce your risk of cancer and improve overall health.

Caring for yourself by adopting a healthier lifestyle creates a ripple effect of well-being for your whole community!

#3 Most Common Cancer in Singapore Men

Lung Cancer

What is lung cancer?

Lung cancer occurs when abnormal cells in the lungs grow uncontrollably, impairing lung function. These cancerous cells can spread to nearby lymph nodes, other parts of the lungs, and distant organs such as the bones, brain, and liver.

According to the Singapore Cancer Registry Annual Report 2022[1], lung cancer is the **third most common cancer** among both men and women. From 2018 to 2022, it accounted for 13.4% of all cancers in men and remains the leading cause of cancer-related deaths in Singaporean men, responsible for 24.4% of such fatalities.

Types of Lung Cancer

Non-Small Cell Lung Cancer

- More common
- Slower growth and spread
- Treatment can involve surgery, radiotherapy, chemotherapy, targeted therapy, and immunotherapy.

Small Cell Lung Cancer

- Accounts for 10%-15% of lung cancers
- Characterised by fast growth and early spread
- Treated mainly with chemotherapy and radiation therapy

What are the risk factors for lung cancer?

Risk factors for lung cancer can be divided into two categories: modifiable and non-modifiable. Modifiable factors are those that can be changed or controlled through lifestyle choices and behaviors, while non-modifiable factors are beyond your control.

Modifiable risk factors include, but are not limited to:

- Smoking and/vaping
- Air pollution
- Exposure to radiation
- Exposure to second- and third-hand smoke

Non-modifiable risk factors include, but are not limited to:

- Age: the risk increases as you get older
- Genetics: a family history of lung cancer (especially in parents or siblings) can elevate your risk
- Previous lung conditions: past lung injuries or diseases can increase vulnerability to lung cancer

What are the symptoms of lung cancer?

Lung cancer often shows no symptoms in its early stages, making early detection difficult. Symptoms typically emerge in the later stages and may include, but are not limited to:

- Shortness of breath
- Change in voice
- Persistent cough
- Constant chest pain
- Loss of appetite
- Recurring fever
- Coughing up blood
- Unintentional weight loss
- Swollen lymph nodes

What screening options are available for detecting lung cancer early?

The only recommended screening test for lung cancer is low-dose computed tomography (also known as a low-dose CT scan, or LDCT). A LDCT scan of the lungs is performed to look for abnormalities in at-risk individuals who do not have symptoms. The goal of LDCT screening is to detect lung cancer at a very early stage, when it is more likely to be cured. At present, annual lung cancer screening is recommended for smokers.

Join the SingapOre Lung cancer Screening Through Integrating CT with other biomarkErs (SOLSTICE) Study[2]

Are you:

- a Singaporean or permanent resident of Singapore;
- between 50 to 80 years old;
- a smoker with a history of 20 or more pack-years*;
- currently smoking or have quit less than 15 years?

If yes, you may consider undergoing a LDCT scan to screen for lung cancer.

*Pack-years = (packs smoked per day; 20 sticks per pack) x (years smoked)

Scan the QR code to learn more about the study and help advance lung cancer screening research in Singapore.

sgcancersociety.info/solsticereferral

#2 Most Common Cancer in Singapore Men

Colorectal Cancer

What is colorectal cancer?

Colorectal cancer develops in the colon or rectum, often beginning with the formation of small growths called polyps on the inner lining. While many polyps remain benign, some undergo genetic and molecular changes that cause them to become cancerous over time. This progression from polyp to cancer involves the accumulation of mutations that disrupt normal cell growth and division, ultimately leading to malignant transformation. Prompt detection and removal of polyps are crucial to prevent the development and spread of colorectal cancer.

Polyps that indicate a higher risk of malignancy typically have certain characteristics, including:

- A size larger than 1 centimeter (10 millimeters) in diameter
- The presence of multiple polyps

These features suggest a greater likelihood of cancerous changes, underscoring the importance of vigilant monitoring and timely intervention to reduce the risk of progression to colorectal cancer.

How prevalent is colorectal cancer in Singapore?

According to the Singapore Cancer Registry Annual Report 2022[1], colorectal cancer is the **second most common cancer among men in Singapore**, with an average of 4 new cases diagnosed daily. It is also the **second leading cause of cancer-related deaths** in the country, accounting for approximately 1 death per day.

What are the risk factors for colorectal cancer?

Risk factors for colorectal cancer fall into two main categories: modifiable and non-modifiable. Modifiable risk factors are those that can be influenced by lifestyle choices and behaviours, while non-modifiable risk factors are genetic or demographic factors beyond one's control.

Modifiable risk factors include, but are not limited to:

- Diet: Consuming processed foods, red meat, meat cooked at high temperatures, and alcohol can increase the risk of colorectal cancer.
- Lifestyle: A sedentary lifestyle with low physical activity can slow bowel movements and raise colorectal cancer risk.

Non-modifiable risk factors include, but are not limited to:

- Ethnicity: According to the Singapore Cancer Registry Annual Report 2022[1], Chinese men have twice the risk of colorectal cancer compared to Malay and Indian men.
- Personal history: Individuals with colorectal polyps or a previous colorectal cancer diagnosis have a higher risk of recurrence.
- Family history: Inherited conditions like familial polyposis significantly increase early-onset colorectal cancer risk and often require preventive measures such as colon removal before age 40.

Understanding these risk factors can help guide preventive strategies like lifestyle modification and timely screening to reduce colorectal cancer incidence and mortality.

What are the symptoms for colorectal cancer?

In its early stages, colorectal cancer may not cause any noticeable symptoms, which is why screening is key for early detection. As it progresses, common signs to watch for include:

- Blood in the stool, which may appear dark or black
- Abdominal pain or discomfort
- Rectal bleeding
- Persistent changes in bowel habits, such as diarrhea, constipation, or a change in stool consistency

If any of these symptoms persist, it is important to consult a healthcare professional for evaluation. Early detection through awareness of symptoms and regular screening can significantly improve treatment outcomes.

What screening options are available for detecting colorectal cancer early?

Several effective screening methods help detect colorectal cancer in its early stages:

- FIT (Faecal Immunochemical Test) Kit: This simple, non-invasive test detects tiny traces of blood in stool samples. It can be conveniently done at home and is an accurate way to catch early signs of colorectal cancer before symptoms appear.
- Colonoscopy: A colonoscopy involves inserting a long, flexible, illuminated tube with a camera through the anus to examine the entire large intestine. The procedure typically takes about 20 to 30 minutes and is performed by a specialist. It allows direct visualisation of the colon lining and enables removal of any abnormal polyps during the same procedure.

- Computed Tomography (CT) Colonography: CT Colonography, also called virtual colonoscopy, is a less invasive test that uses CT scans to create detailed images of the colon and rectum. It is an alternative to the traditional colonoscopy for people aged 50 and above who are at average risk. If your first CT colonography is clear, it is usually recommended every 5 years. This test is especially useful when a regular colonoscopy can't be done or wasn't fully successful. With some preparation like bowel cleaning, it can detect growths or polyps 6mm or bigger, though it may sometimes give more false alarms compared to finding larger growths of 10mm or more.

Speak to your doctor to find out what is suitable for you.

Which Risk Group Do I Belong To[3] ?

Increased Risk Group

- Parent or sibling diagnosed with colorectal cancer before age 60
- Personal history of colorectal polyps, colorectal cancer, ovarian cancer, or endometrial cancer

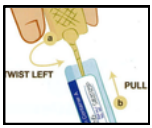
High Risk Group

- Family history of Familial adenomatous Polyposis (FAP)
- Family history of hereditary non-polyposis colorectal cancer (Lynch Syndrome)
- Diagnosed with Inflammatory Bowel Disease (IBD), including left-sided colitis and pan-colitis

How to use a FIT (Faecal Immunochemical Test) Kit?

Step 1:

Write your name, identification number and sample collection date on the label



Step 2:

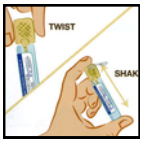
Open the FIT kit. Twist the cap to the left and pull out the cap with the stick from the FIT kit.

Step 3:

Hold the stick straight down. Scrape up and down 2-3 times, and left to right 2-3 times across the stool surface.

Step 4:

Collect a small amount of stool with the stick.



Step 5:

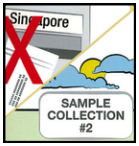
Insert the stick back into the FIT kit, and twist the cap to close tightly. Shake the FIT kit 2-3 times.

Step 6:

Wrap the FIT kit with one absorbent sheet (side with “holes” facing inwards). Place it into the bag and seal it tight.

Step 7:

Complete the registration form and place it in the envelope together with the bag from step 6. Seal the envelope properly.



Step 8:

Return your FIT kits to the same clinic you have collected from.

Do not mail out the FIT kit. Repeat steps 1-8 the next time you need it.

You can now collect and return your FIT kit from your HealthierSG Clinic!

#1 Most Common Cancer in Singapore Men

Prostate Cancer

What is prostate cancer?

Prostate cancer develops when prostate cells begin to grow uncontrollably, causing the prostate gland to enlarge. This enlargement can press on nearby organs such as the bladder, leading to urinary problems. If left untreated, these abnormal cell growths can develop into prostate cancer.

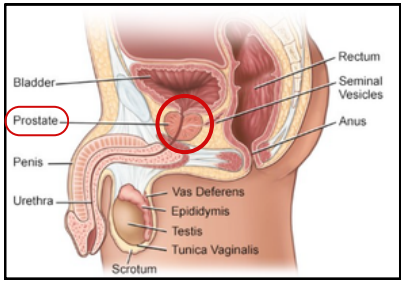
According to the Singapore Cancer Registry Annual Report 2022[1], prostate cancer:

- accounts for 17.4% of all cancers in Singaporean men;
- is the most common cancer diagnosed among men in Singapore.

These statistics highlight the significant impact of prostate cancer on the male population, emphasizing the importance of early detection and regular screening, especially for men over the age of 50 or those with a family history of the disease.

DO YOU KNOW?

The prostate gland, located below the bladder, produces fluid that nourishes and protects sperm.
It contributes to semen and surrounds the urethra, affecting urine flow. The seminal vesicles, glands behind the prostate, produce most of this fluid.



Anatomy of Male Pelvic Area[4]

What are the risk factors for prostate cancer?

Risk factors for prostate cancer fall into two main categories: modifiable and non-modifiable. Modifiable risk factors are those that can be influenced by lifestyle choices and behaviours, while non-modifiable risk factors are genetic or demographic factors beyond one's control.

Modifiable risk factors include, but are not limited to:

- Diet high in processed meats, fats, and sweets, and low in fibre
- Lifestyle habits such as smoking and obesity
- Exposure to toxic substances like cadmium and certain metals

Non-modifiable risk factors include, but are not limited to:

- Age: The risk increases with age, particularly in men over 50
- Ethnicity: Chinese men in Singapore face nearly twice the risk compared to Malay and Indian men
- Family history: Having a close relative with prostate cancer raises one's risk
- Inherited gene mutations: Mutations in tumour suppressor genes like BRCA1 and BRCA2 significantly increase prostate cancer risk

High Risk Group[3]: Men with a strong family history of prostate cancer (e.g. one or more first-degree relatives (father, brother) diagnosed before 65 years old) may be advised to start screening 5 to 10 years earlier than the youngest affected family member.

Understanding these factors helps guide prevention, early detection, and timely treatment.

What are the symptoms for prostate cancer?

Early-stage prostate cancer usually causes little to no symptoms because it grows slowly. It is commonly detected through routine medical check-ups or blood tests, such as the prostate-specific antigen (PSA) test.

Possible symptoms of prostate cancer are, but not limited to:

- Difficulty urinating
- Frequent urination, especially at night
- Urine flow that starts and stops rather than being smooth
- Slower urine stream
- Blood in the urine or semen
- Painful urination
- Unexplained weight loss and loss of appetite
- Persistent pain in the back, chest, pelvis, or other bones
- Detectable lumps on the prostate gland
- Weakness or swelling in the legs and feet due to nerve compression from cancer spread

If any of these symptoms occur, it is important to seek medical advice promptly for evaluation and diagnosis.

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer among men in Singapore, with about 4 new cases diagnosed daily.

What screening options are available for detecting prostate cancer early?

Digital Rectal Examination (DRE):
During this examination, a doctor inserts a gloved, lubricated finger into the rectum to feel the prostate for any hard or lumpy areas that may indicate cancer.

Prostate-Specific Antigen (PSA) Test:
This blood test measures the level of PSA, a protein produced by the prostate. It is recommended for men at higher risk of prostate cancer, such as those aged 50 to 70, men with strong family history of prostate cancer, i.e. one or more first-degree relatives (father, brother) diagnosed before age 65 years.

These screening methods help detect prostate cancer at an early stage when treatment is more effective. Regular discussions with healthcare providers about individual risk factors and screening schedules are advised.

What is a PSA Test?

PSA (Prostate-Specific Antigen) is a protein produced by both normal and cancerous prostate cells. Higher levels of PSA in the blood may indicate an increased risk of prostate cancer, but elevated PSA does not confirm cancer as other conditions like prostate enlargement or inflammation can also raise PSA levels.

The PSA test is classified as a screening test recommended for men at higher risk. It is important to discuss with your doctor whether the PSA test is appropriate for you based on your individual risk and symptoms.

Common Cancer in Young Singapore Men

Testicular Cancer

What is testicular cancer?

Testicular cancer is one of the most common solid tumours affecting **males aged 15 to 35**, accounting for 1-2% of all male cancers. Despite this, it is highly curable, with a five-year survival rate exceeding 95%[4].

Types of Testicular Cancer[5]

Germ Cell Tumours

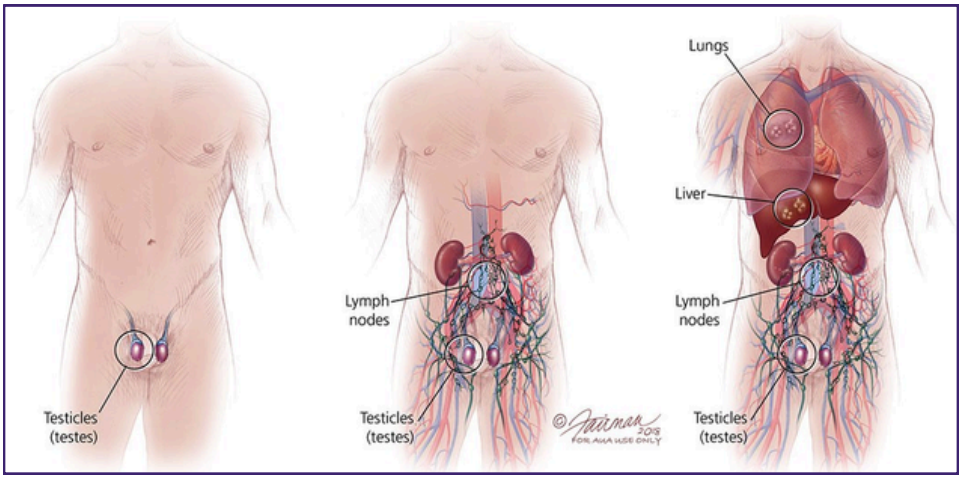
About 95% of testicular cancers develop from germ cells, the sperm-producing cells. These tumours fall into two main types:

- Seminomas: Slow-growing cancers, typically affecting men aged 25 to 45.
- Non-seminomas: Faster-growing cancers that spread more quickly, common in men from their late teens to early 30s.

Stromal Tumours

These tumors develop in the hormone-producing tissues of the testicles known as stromal tumours. Stromal tumours are less common and are usually non-cancerous.

What are the stages[5] for testicular cancer?



Stage I
The cancer is confined to the testicles and has not spread to other parts of the body.

Stage II
The cancer has spread from the testicles to nearby lymph nodes.

Stage III
The cancer has spread to other lymph nodes or distant organs in the body. This spread is known as metastasis.

What are the risk factors[5] for testicular cancer?

A history of undescended testicles, a family history of testicular cancer, and previous cancer in the other testicle are important non-modifiable risk factors for developing testicular cancer.

What are the symptoms[5] of testicular cancer?

Common symptoms of testicular cancer include, but are not limited to:

- A painless lump or swelling in one testicle, which may vary in size from as small as a pea to larger
- A dull ache or heavy sensation in the lower abdomen or scrotum
- Pain or discomfort in a testicle or the scrotum
- A feeling of heaviness or firmness in the scrotum
- Sudden swelling or fluid buildup in the scrotum

Less common symptoms may indicate advanced disease, including:

- Coughing, persistent back or bone pain
- Swelling or lumps in the neck or other lymph nodes
- Unexplained weight loss or fatigue

If any of these symptoms persist, prompt medical consultation is important for early diagnosis and treatment.

What screening options[4] are available for detecting testicular cancer early?

Screening options for testicular cancer include:

- Scrotal Ultrasound: This imaging test utilizes sound waves to produce detailed images of the testicles, enabling the identification of internal or external abnormalities.
- Computed Tomography (CT) Scan: A CT scan of the abdomen and pelvis helps determine if testicular cancer has spread beyond the testicles.
- Testicular Self-Examination: A simple monthly self-check to detect lumps, swelling, or changes in the size or shape of the testicles, usually performed after a warm shower when the scrotum is relaxed.

Step-By-Step Guide to Testicular Self-Examination [4] [6]

Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Gently hold one testicle between your thumbs and index fingers.	Carefully roll the testicle between your fingers, using gentle but firm pressure. Feel for any hard lumps, smooth rounded nodules, or any changes in size, shape, texture, or consistency.	Locate the epididymis, a soft, rope-like structure at the back of the testicle. Familiarity with this will help you avoid mistaking it for an abnormal lump.

If you feel a solid, firm mass within the testicle, seek medical attention immediately for proper evaluation and diagnosis.

Cancer Support

How SCS supports the cancer journey

No one has to face the cancer journey alone. The Singapore Cancer Society (SCS) walks with you through every step by providing cancer patients and their loved ones through a continuum of care across the cancer journey.

What We Do	How We Do It	Our Services
Reduce Cancer Incidence	Bolster Cancer Prevention & Control	Screening Services & HPV Vaccination Programme
		Public Education
Increase Survival Rate	Provide Cancer Care & Support	Financial & Welfare Assistance
		Cancer Rehabilitation Support
Improve Quality of Life		Psychosocial Counselling
		Cancer Support Services
		Home Hospice Care
Greater Community Action	Rally the Community	Advocacy

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3 https://www.ams.edu.sg/view-pdf.aspx?file=media%5c4817_fi_59.pdf&ofile=STRC+Report+March+2019.p%E2%80%A6

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5 https://testicularcancersociety.org/pages/about-tc

6 https://testicularcancersociety.org/pages/self-exam-how-to

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