



Lung  
Cancer



Breast  
Cancer



Prostate  
Cancer

# the other big c's

These days, most of us know someone who has been affected by cancer. The disease not only affects the person who is diagnosed, but also their loved ones. Your first line of defense? Get informed. Read on for a rundown on some more common cancers and how you can reduce your risk of “the big C.”



Gynecologic  
Cancer



Colon  
Cancer



Skin  
Cancer

## WHAT IS CANCER?

According to the National Cancer Institute (part of the National Institutes of Health), cancer is defined as “diseases in which abnormal cells divide without control and can invade nearby tissues.” There are currently more than 100 different types of cancer. While the disease typically originates in the organ or cell in which they start, cancer cells can also spread to other parts of the body through the blood and lymph nodes.

## WHAT ARE SYMPTOMS OF CANCER?

Symptoms vary depending on the type and location of the disease. Lung cancer, for example, can cause coughing, shortness of breath, or chest pain, whereas those suffering from colon cancer often experience diarrhea, constipation, and blood in the stool.

Some cancers are silent diseases with little or no symptoms; others, such as pancreatic cancer, typically display symptoms once the disease has reached an advanced stage. Fortunately, there are tests that can detect early stages of some cancers:

-  **Biopsy**
-  **Chest x-ray**
-  **Blood tests (which look for chemicals in the form of tumor markers)**
-  **Bone marrow biopsy (for lymphoma or leukemia)**
-  **Fecal occult blood test (hemocult)**
-  **Computed tomography (CT scan)**
-  **Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI scan)**
-  **Mammograms**

**Remember, health is action: Your physician is committed to increasing health and survival rates throughout your community. Visit your Spirit of Women hospital today to learn more on how to lower your risk of cancer.**

### SOURCES:

[www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)  
[www.foundationforwomenscancer.org](http://www.foundationforwomenscancer.org)  
[www.womenshealth.gov](http://www.womenshealth.gov)  
[www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov)  
[www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov)

To learn more about St. Luke's cancer services, visit [stlukes-stl.com](http://stlukes-stl.com).

**St. Luke's Cancer Resource Center**  
Offering resources and support for cancer patients, their family and community members.  
314-205-6055

## COMMON FORMS OF CANCER

The deadliest (and most common) form of cancer in both men and women, **lung cancer**. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), lung cancer affects more Americans than breast, colon and prostate cancers—combined.



### Other common types of cancer:

-  **Breast** – 1 in every 8 women will be diagnosed with breast cancer over a lifetime. Family history, among other factors, can play a role in determining risk for the disease. Advanced cases of breast cancer typically occur in women over age 50.
-  **Prostate** – Found in tissues of the prostate, this disease is responsible for an estimated 33,000 deaths of American men each year. While all men are at risk for prostate cancer, some factors—including age, family history, and alcohol consumption—can increase risk.
-  **Colon** – 1 in 20 men and women will develop cancer of the colon or rectum throughout their lifetime. Screenings for colorectal cancer can find precancerous polyps, which can be removed before they turn into cancer.
-  **Gynecologic Cancer** – This disease mainly consists of the cervix, ovaries, uterus, vagina, and vulva and was diagnosed in over 80,000 women in 2007. Each type of gynecologic cancer is unique and has different symptoms, but all women are at risk.
-  **Skin Cancer** – While the two most common types of skin cancer, basal cell and squamous cell carcinomas, are dangerous, a third type of the disease, melanoma, is especially dangerous and has accounted for about 68,130 cases of skin cancer in 2010.

## WHAT CAN I DO TO LOWER MY RISK?

You can take steps today to lower your risk for cancer tomorrow by:

- Eating a healthy diet
- Exercising regularly
- Limiting alcohol
- Maintaining a healthy weight
- Minimizing your exposure to radiation and toxic chemicals
- Not smoking or chewing tobacco
- Reducing sun exposure
- Visiting your physician regularly



The Other Big C's is powered by Spirit of Women®, a national network of hospitals and healthcare providers across the United States that ascribe to the highest standards of excellence in women's health, education, and community outreach.