

# If you are worried about cancer, START HERE



## When should I get checked for cancer?

Doctors can find some cancers before you even feel sick. Finding it early makes it easier to fix. Talk to your prison health team about tests for these types of cancer:

- **Breast cancer:** For women ages 40 to 74.
- **Cervical cancer:** For women ages 21 to 65.
- **Colon cancer:** For adults ages 45 to 75.
- **Liver cancer:** For adults who have had liver disease (like Hepatitis B or C or cirrhosis).
- **Lung cancer:** For adults ages 50 to 80 who have smoked a lot for many years.
- **Prostate cancer:** For men ages 55 to 69. Talk to your doctor about if this check is right for you.



## Watch for these "warning signs"

Sometimes you feel a change in your body. It doesn't always mean you have cancer, but you should tell the medical team if you notice:

- You are losing weight and you don't know why.
- You see blood when you go to the bathroom.
- Your stomach hurts a lot and won't stop.
- You have a fever or "night sweats" (waking up wet from sweat).
- You have a cough that will not go away.
- You feel very, very tired and it's getting worse.



## What to ask your nurse or doctor

If you are worried, ask these two simple questions:

1. "Do I need to be checked for any cancer?"
2. "Could the way my body feels be from cancer?"

### If you have cancer, ask these questions:

- **What is the name of my cancer?** (This helps your family look it up.)
- **Where is the cancer in my body?**
- **Is this medicine meant to make the cancer go away forever?**
- **How well do you think this treatment will work?**
- **What is the next step? When will it happen? Who do I talk to?** (Knowing the date helps you speak up for yourself if it doesn't happen on time.)

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## ADVICE FROM OTHERS IN PRISON

### GET CHECKED!

Catching cancer early is very important.

### KEEP TALKING.

It is OK to ask the doctor to use easy words if you don't understand the "medical talk."

### GET A HELPER.

Sign papers so a friend or family member outside can talk to the prison for you.

### ASK FOR YOUR RECORDS.

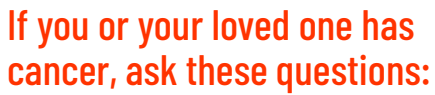
Ask for copies of your medical papers and keep them organized in a folder.

### FIND A FRIEND.

Talk to a cellmate or a peer helper. They can help you with chores or just listen when you need to talk.

### STAY STRONG.

Hang up cards from home or happy pictures in your cell to help you stay positive.



**Other notes:**

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