

Cancer- I am and I will

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Cancer is one of the four major types of non-communicable diseases (cardiovascular disease, diabetes, cancer and chronic respiratory diseases). With over 100 types of cancer, affecting different parts of the body they can be either benign or malignant. More than 30% of cancer could be prevented by modifying or avoiding key risk factors. The main preventable risk factors for cancer are: tobacco use; being overweight or obese; unhealthy diet; and a lack of physical activity. Most common cancers affecting men are lung and bladder and for women they are breast and colorectal. Countries can prevent cancer through: implementing tobacco control policies, promoting healthy diet and physical activity and vaccinating against human papilloma virus and hepatitis B virus. Comprehensive cancer control plans are needed to improve cancer prevention and care, especially in low-income and middle-income countries.^[1]

The primary goal of celebrating World Cancer Day each year is to significantly reduce illness and death caused by cancer and is an opportunity to rally the international community to end the injustice of preventable suffering from cancer and lastly to target misinformation, raises awareness and reduces stigma. The WCD was instituted by Union for International Cancer Control (UICC- UICC is a Geneva based leading international Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) founded in 1933) in 2008 by formally writing goals of the World Cancer Declaration.^[1]

Each year on 4th February, World Cancer Day is celebrated as an opportunity to commemorate, raise awareness and rally everyone - governments, civil society, individuals and the international community - to end the injustice of preventable suffering from cancer. The theme for the year 2019 is "I AM AND I WILL".^[2]

In 2018, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) estimated the global cancer burden to have risen to 18.1 million new cases and 9.6 million deaths. One in 5 men and one in 6 women worldwide develop cancer during their lifetime; one in 8 men and one in 11 women eventually die from the disease. Worldwide, there are an estimated 44 million people who are alive within 5 years of a cancer diagnosis, called the 5-year prevalence. The Middle East is one of the most affected regions in the world. In Jordan, cancer is the second leading cause of death. The Jordan Cancer Registry established in 1996 is mandated to collect data on cancer cases to help identify trends and ultimately improve care for patients fighting cancer. Health care for cancer patients has improved substantially in the last years. Today, Jordan is considered a regional centre for excellence for cancer health care, offering

all Jordanians access to free quality cancer care.^[1]

Many people living with cancer experience pain. Almost 55% of those undergo cancer treatment for pain and 66% of those undergo treatment for terminal cancer.

Pain can be very disturbing- it causes irritability and at the moment Cancer patients need the interaction and support from family members and friends. The quality of life is affected because of the pain. So that is why the World Health Organization is launching new guidelines to change that.

Governments with these guidelines will get clear knowledge of what is needed, the steps to cure cancer pain and what medications need to be available be it the normal analgesics, morphine for those who are in dire need of it and radiotherapy for those with metastasis. This can be followed in any country of the world and is inexpensive. In fact, it is relatively cheap- not only in developed countries but the also the poorest countries with the highest number of cancer patients can also avail of this treatment.^[2]

The first level of cancer treatment doesn't require opioids but if the existing treatment is working the level needs to be scaled up and morphine has to be included.

- Administration of analgesic medicine for cancer patients-
- Given on a regular basis by the clock rather than on demand
- Oral administration is preferred

The dose should be determined on individual basis

Here is a fear that if morphine is very easily available it will lead to abuse and feud the opioid addiction crisis. Steps have to be taken to avoid it as it is a legit fear. But this fear should not stand in the way of patients who are in severe pain and in dire need of Morphine. Every cancer patient has the right to health. This means being able to access quality and acceptable health care and to enjoy the conditions of life that support staying healthy.^[3]

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