healthy choices = healthy living

Youth education lesson plan

Estimated duration:60-80 minutes

## Learning objectives:

* Participants will be able to name the four most common types of cancer in the NWT
* Participants will know some of the causes of cancer
* Participants will understand that living a healthy lifestyle is a way to reduce the risk of developing cancer

| Stage | Time | Notes | Resources |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Pre-intro | 5 mins | Name game: “My name is --- and I’m throwing the ball to ---.” (up to three balls) | Juggle balls |
| Introduction | 10 mins | Brainstorm: what do we know about cancer?  Cancer is a disease of cells; it’s a result of cells dividing out of control  NWT cancer facts  Chances are we have all been affected by cancer. | Presentation:  Slides 2-3  projector, screen |
| Types of cancer—brainstorm and discussion | 5 mins | Ask group to shout out different types of cancer  **Q1: How many types of cancer do you think there are?**  A: Over 200.  **Q2: Why are there so many types?**  A: Cancer is a disease of cells. Each different type of cells (e.g. skin, lung, etc.) gives rise to a different type of cancer.  Different types of cancer can have different causes and are treated in different ways. We are still better at treating some types of cancer than others, but making progress. Early detection increases chances of survival.  Show a diagram of the human body and locate different organs, etc. (e.g. prostate, colon, cervix)  Discuss the most common cancers in NWT. | Slides 4-11 |
| Causes of cancer | 10 mins | Divide class into groups. Give each group a set of cause cards.  For each question, each group should decide which card(s) they think show the answer and hold them up. Ask groups to explain their choices. Do all groups agree? Why or why not?  **Q1: Which of these things do not cause cancer?**  A: Water. Remove these cards from game.  **Q2: Which ones can you control?**  A: Smoking, diet/weight/physical activity, alcohol, UV  **Q3: Which one is the most important cause of lung cancer in the NWT?**  A: Smoking. Tobacco use is also associated with other cancers. Second-hand smoke is also associated with lung cancer. 17% of Canadians over 15 smoke, but 34% of NWT residents smoke. Lung cancer is the number one cause of cancer death in men and women in the NWT. 25% of cancer deaths in the NWT are from lung cancer.  Discuss: Do any of these causes surprise you?  Slide 13: What can we do to reduce our risk of cancer? | Slides 12-13  Cause cards |
| 4 Corners Activity | 5 mins | \*\* All opinions are valid; no right or wrong answers. \*\*   Place four signs around the room (“Absolutely!”, “No Way!”, “Yes, but…”, “No, but…”). Participants go to the sign that reflects how they feel about the statements listed below. Once everyone is standing under a sign, you will ask the participants in each group to explain why they are standing there. Participants can move if they change their mind.  **Statements**:  1. I’m too young to think about cancer.  2. I think healthy eating is the most important thing I can do for my health.  3. Right now, I’ll do everything I can to be healthy. | Sign cards, tape |
| Living a healthy lifestyle | 10 mins | What can we do now to improve our health later in life? Discuss.  *High fibre diet, little sugar, active lifestyle, healthy weight, smoking, alcohol.* What does this mean? Are there challenges to this? What can we really do? |  |
| Cancer screening | 5 mins | It is much easier to treat cancer successfully before it has spread to other parts of the body. That is why early diagnosis is so important: to improve the chances of survival.  Early detection can save lives. Tell your parents and grandparents. | Slide 14 |
| Quiz | 15 mins | Three teams in separate locations equal distance from a bell. Question is asked, and groups confer. Group members take turns running to ring the bell to give answer. | Slide 15  Bell  10 quiz questions at the end of this document |
| Closing | 5 mins | Reflection: Think of something you learned that you want to share with a family member or friend. Write it down. | Markers, Post-its |

Quiz: Youth Cancer education session

1. **Cancer is generally a disease of…**
   1. Childhood
   2. Middle age
   3. Old age

*Answer: C. Cancers are caused by damage to our DNA. This accumulates over time, so cancer is generally a disease of old age.*

1. **How does cancer develop?**
   1. You can catch it from someone
   2. Cells divide out of control
   3. From a blood transfusion

*Answer: B. Cancer is a class of diseases characterized by out-of-control cell growth. Cancer harms the body when damaged cells divide uncontrollably to form lumps or masses of tissue called tumors (except in the case of leukemia where cancer prohibits normal blood function by abnormal cell division in the blood stream).*

1. **Name the 3 most common cancers among males in the NWT.**

*Answer: Prostate cancer, colorectal cancer, and lung cancer are the most common types of cancer among males in the NWT. However, lung accounts for more than one quarter of all cancer deaths among NWT males.*

1. **True or false: direct exposure to the sun is most harmful between 11 am and 4 pm.**

*Answer: True! Even on days that are not bright and sunny, 80% of ultraviolet (UV) rays will pass through haze, light cloud, and fog. Remember to put on clothing to cover your arms and legs, wear a hat and sunglasses, and put on sunscreen and lip balm with SPF.*

1. **True or false: people with healthy lifestyles do not need to participate in cancer screening.**

*Answer: False! Cancer can develop in people with healthy lifestyles. Early detection can save lives. The best way to detect cancer in its earliest stage is to participate in regular screening tests. If you are eligible for cancer screening, discuss this with your health care provider. Encourage your parents and grandparents and other loved ones to get screened!*

1. **True or false: your health care provider will be the first person to detect early warning signs of cancer.**

*Answer: False! You know your body better than anyone else. Your health is your responsibility. Be aware of your body and report any changes to your doctor as soon as possible. Health care professionals are trained to spot the early warning signs of cancer and other diseases. Detecting and treating cancer early could save your life.*

1. **March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month! Colorectal cancer is the second most common cause of cancer-related death in the NWT. Colorectal cancer death rates in the NWT are approximately twice as high as in the rest of Canada. Name two things you can do to reduce your risk of colorectal cancer.**

*Answer: Eating foods that contain a lot of fibre (like fruit and vegetables, beans, and whole wheat) decrease the risk of colorectal cancer. Diets high in processed meats increase the risk of colorectal cancer. Heavy alcohol consumption and smoking also increases the risk of colorectal cancer. Regular physical activity also reduces colorectal cancer risk. Many cancers, including colorectal cancer, are attributable to food, obesity, and physical inactivity.*

1. **True or false: a young woman under the age of 21 should start having Pap tests as soon as she becomes sexually active.**

*Answer: False. Women are recommended to have annual or biannual Pap tests from the age of 21 or three years after they start having sex, whichever comes earliest. The Pap test is recommended until 69 years of age.*

*Note: the HPV vaccine does not replace Pap tests. The Pap test finds abnormal cells in the cervix before they become cancerous. Even if you have had the HPV vaccine, it is important to continue having Pap tests.*

1. **In 2011 and 2012, what percentage of NWT residents aged 50-74 had a colorectal cancer screening test?**
   1. 20%
   2. 40%
   3. 60%

*Answer: Unfortunately, only 20% of eligible individuals had a colorectal cancer screening test in the NWT in 2011 and 2012. This could be a reason why 50% of colorectal cancers in the NWT are diagnosed very late, when the patient is already very sick. Detecting cancer earlier improves the patient’s chances of survival. By participating in screening programs, NWT residents between 50 and 74 can detect colorectal cancer at an earlier stage.*

1. **True or false: men are at risk of developing breast cancer.**

*Answer: True! Although it is rare, men can develop breast cancer too.*