Cancer develops over time. It is a result of a complex mix of factors related to:
- **Lifestyle** (daily behaviors)
- **Environment**
- **Heredity**
- **These are called risk factors**

Why talk about cancer?
- Because cancer is now the 2nd leading cause of death for American Indians and Alaska Natives (AIANs) over 45 years old.
- Cancer is continuing to increase with AIANs even through the disease is becoming less common among whites.
- The primary reason for our continued increase is due to our daily behaviors
- Reduce Your Risk for Cancer.

What is Cancer? (CAN-sir)
A group of over 100 diseases in which abnormal cells
- Divide without control
- Don’t die when they should (Apoptosis)

Cancer is primarily a disease of older people
- Occasionally occurs in young people (e.g., childhood leukemia, cervical, testicular)
- But, the majority of cancers appear in people who are older (over 45)

Cancer & Natives Facts
There are different types of cancer that are higher or lower by geographic region and Tribal Nation; such as:
- The rate of prostate cancer among Northern Plains is very high
- There is more stomach, kidney and gallbladder cancer among Southwestern Tribal Nations
- There is more CRC, breast and lung cancer among AK, Northern Plains and Southern Plains

What are three types of cancer that you can get screened for without symptoms?
- **Breast Cancer** – Mammograms (Begin after age 40 and women only)
- **Cervix Cancer** – Pap Tests (Begin in child bearing age)
- **Colon Cancer** – Colonoscopy, Flexible Sigmoidoscopy, or a Stool Test (Begin at 50 years old for both men and women)
Different types of cancer affect different types of body tissue

- **Carcinoma.** Originates from tissues that cover a surface or line a cavity of the body. This is the most common type of cancer.
- **Sarcoma.** Originates from tissues which connect, support or surround other tissues and organs. Can be either soft tissue or bone sarcomas.
- **Myeloma.** Originates in the bone marrow in the blood cells that manufacture antibodies.
- **Lymphoma.** Originates in lymph system--the circulatory network of vessels, spaces, and nodes carrying lymph, the almost colorless fluid that bathes the body’s cells.
- **Leukemia.** Involves the blood-forming tissues and blood cells.

Cancers are identified by the place they originate within the body. For example:

- Breast
- Cervix
- Colon
- Stomach
- Prostate
- Pancreas
- Brain
- Bladder

Can Cancer Cells spread to other parts of the body?

- Cancer cells have the ability to spread from one part of the body to another part of the body.
- When cancer cells go to another body part, they can begin to grow without control in the new location.
- But a breast cancer cell in the liver is still “breast cancer” (primary site).

What is Metastasis (ma-TAS-tasis)?

- This means that cancer cells have spread from one body part to another.
- The cancer cells spread from the "primary site" to other organs by traveling through the blood vessels or lymph vessels.

What is cancer screening?

- The process of evaluating a healthy individual to see if they have a tumor that is pre-cancerous or cancer.

What is diagnosis?

- The process and result of determining if the symptoms or evidence of cancer is really cancer.

The Provider...

- Asks about symptoms
- Asks about medical history
- Performs a physical exam
- Orders tests and imaging procedures
- Performs biopsy--to determine whether cancer cells are present.

Daily physical activity protects you against developing cancer!
### What “makes” something a bigger “risk” for cancer?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>how often does the “risk” or behavior happen? (e.g., smoke &gt;2 packs of cigarettes a day)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>how long does the “risk” or behavior last? (e.g., smoked since 14 years old)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intensity</td>
<td>how strong is the dosage of the “risk” or behavior? (e.g., smoke Marlboro -- high nicotine cigarettes)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Risk Factors:

- Usually refers to a behavior or exposure to something that increases your chances of getting cancer
- They may also be something that you have little to no control over
- Hereditary genes from your parents
- Your gender (male or female)
- Pollution of the water or land where you fish or hunt

### What is a tumor and is it cancer?

- This is a growth or mass formed by excess cells
- A “benign” tumor is not cancer and it does not “become” cancer. It just stays “benign”
- 8 out of 10 tumors are not cancer (they are "benign")
- A "malignant" tumor is cancer and can spread to other parts of the body

**Benign tumors:**
- Not cancer
- Can often be removed
- In most cases do not come back
- Do not spread to other parts of the body
- Rarely a threat to life

**Malignant Tumors:**
- Are cancer
- Cells abnormal
- Cells divide without control or order
- Enlarge “mass”
- Metastasize

### How is cancer treated?

Most cancers are treated with:
- Surgery
- Radiation therapy (including new ways to do brachytherapy)
- Chemotherapy
- Hormone therapy
- Cryosurgery
- Biological therapy
- A combination of the above

### Why was cancer not common among our ancestors?

They lived a lifestyle of eating healthy and lots of exercise!

### REMEMBER:

- Certain types of cancer are preventable!
- Early detection is important!
- Get your cancer screening today!

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“Ceremonial tobacco” use typically is not a risk because there is brief frequency, duration, and intensity (dosage)
The “shield” of health protecting against cancer may include daily physical activity, healthy, low fat diet & limited or no alcohol, and no commercial tobacco use.

**Daily physical activity may help prevent:**
- Breast
- Colorectal
- Prostate
- … about 30% of all cancers

**Risks for cancer include:**
- Obesity
- Daily intake of alcohol
- Daily intake of commercial tobacco smoke including Second Hand Smoke
- Exposure to Environmental Contaminants
- Not eating fruits and vegetables daily
- Not getting enough exercise or physical activity daily.
- Diets that have high amounts of fat
- More than three sexual partners throughout your lifetime

**Behavioral Risk Factors:**
- Alcohol (~ >7 for women or >14 for men drinks a week) is a risk factor for:
  - Breast Cancer
  - Colon Cancer
  - Prostate Cancer
- Exposure to smoke form commercial tobacco is a risk factor for:
  - Cervix Cancer
  - Lung Cancer
  - Colorectal Cancer
  - Stomach Cancer
  - Esophageal Cancer
  - Pancreas Cancer
  - Prostate Cancer
- Obesity is a risk factor for:
  - Breast Cancer
  - Gallbladder Cancer
  - Colorectal Cancer
  - Prostate Cancer

What does the shield below tell you about cancer risks?

The holes mean the person has risks for cancer.

For more information, contact
Native American Cancer Research Corp. (NACR)
3022 South Nova Road
Pine, CO 80470-7830
Phone: 303-838-9359;
Native American Cancer Survivors’ Network
1-800-537-8295

Partially supported by Mayo Clinic’s “Spirit of EAGLES Community Network Programs 2” [P.I. Kaur; U54CA153605]