



MEDIA RELEASE

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Make cancer screening part of your new year's resolutions

It's the time of year when many people make promises to themselves to eat healthy, stop smoking or lose weight. The healthcare team at the Walker Family Cancer Centre of the Niagara Health System and Cancer Care Ontario want to make it a time of year when people make the resolution to get screened for cancer.

"Cancer mortality rates for colorectal, breast and cervical cancers have been declining over the years thanks in part to an increase in screening but we still have a long way to go," says Dr. Janice Giesbrecht, Niagara Health System Chief of Oncology. "We know that cancer screening saves lives and that's why it's important that everyone talk to their healthcare provider about getting checked."

Cancer is the second leading cause of death in Canada, and colorectal, breast and cervical cancers account for 30 per cent of new cases.

In the Niagara, Hamilton, Haldimand, Brant area, cancer screening rates are in line with the provincial average, but there is still an opportunity for more people to get screened.

"It's extremely important that people take advantage of the screening programs available in Ontario," says Dr. Linda Rabeneck, Vice President, Prevention and Cancer Control, Cancer Care Ontario. "Screening tests, such as the Fecal Occult Blood test, mammography and Pap tests are free of charge and can detect cancer before any physical symptoms show up, when cancer is most treatable."

To get the message across that cancer screening saves lives, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care is launching a [new ad](#) encouraging men and women 50 to 74 to take control of their health.

"The word cancer is a scary word for many people, but there have been significant advancements in cancer care and with today's screening programs, cancer can be prevented or caught early, giving patients a better chance of survival," says Deb Matthews, Minister of Health and Long-Term Care. "I hope this ad campaign will reach people at a time when their health is already top of mind and that they will make the choice to speak to their healthcare provider about getting screened."

To find out when you should start screening for cancer, or to encourage friends and family to get themselves checked, visit the Time to Screen Tool at: www.ontario.ca/screenforlife.