

## Helpful Wellness Reminders

Life can get busy and it is easy to forget about some of the things we can be doing to look after our health. Here is a reminder of the wellness activities and screening tests recommended by Cancer Care Nova Scotia.

Cancer Care Nova Scotia endorses these steps from the Canadian Cancer Society to reduce your risk of developing cancer:

- Be a non-smoker and avoid second-hand smoke.
- Eat 5 to 10 servings of vegetables and fruit a day. Choose high fibre, lower fat foods.
- If you drink alcohol, limit your intake to 1 to 2 drinks a day.
- Be physically active on a regular basis - this will also help you maintain a healthy body weight.
- Protect yourself and your family from the sun. Reduce sun exposure between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. Check your skin regularly and report any changes to your doctor.

### Be Aware of Signs and Symptoms

If you have a concern or notice a change in your normal state of health, you should discuss it with your primary healthcare provider such as your family physician or nurse practitioner. Most often, symptoms we experience are not due to cancer. A visit with your health care provider will ensure that your concern is addressed appropriately. The Canadian Cancer Society has detailed information about symptoms of the most common cancers.

### Smoking Cessation

Recent research shows that people with MS who continue to smoke are at risk of more disease activity and more progression of their disease than people who are non-smokers. Ask your family doctor or pharmacist about smoking cessation strategies.

For more information and support: <https://tobaccofree.novascotia.ca/> or call 811.

**For more information visit the Cancer Care Nova Scotia website**  
**<http://www.nshealth.ca/cancer-care> or talk with your primary care provider.**

## Nova Scotia Breast Screening Program

**All women 40 years of age should have a mammogram. You do not need to have a referral to have a mammogram.**

- Women in Nova Scotia, aged 40-49, are recommended to have annual screening mammography.
- Women in Nova Scotia, aged 50-74, are recommended to have screening mammography at two year intervals.
- Women 50-74 can also be recommended to return on an annual basis if they: have a strong family history of breast cancer (mother, sister, daughter, father, brother, son); are currently on HRT; or the radiologist has recommended returning sooner.
- Women over the age of 75 are recommended to continue to have screening mammography if they are in good health.

### **Booking an Appointment**

To book a screening appointment, women over the age of 40 who have no breast problems and no breast implants may self-refer by calling:

**HRM: 473-3960**

**Toll-Free: 1-800-565-0548**

**Please have your health card ready when you call!**

A file will be made for you when you call to book your screening mammogram appointment that includes your name, date of birth, mailing address and health card number. You do not need to have a doctor's referral to make an appointment. However, please provide us with the name of your family doctor or nurse practitioner so that we can forward information regarding your mammogram results. For more information <https://breastscreening.nshealth.ca/breast-imaging-guidelines>

### Skin Cancer

Exposure to the sun can be harmful to your skin and increase your risk for skin cancer. Using sunscreen and/or covering your skin is recommended. For more information on sun safety contact the Canadian Cancer Society at [www.cancer.ca](http://www.cancer.ca).

It is possible that certain medications used to treat MS may increase your risk of skin cancer. Your neurologist would have discussed this with you before you started the medication. Although the risk of skin cancer while taking these medication is very low, it is recommended that you have your primary care provider examine your skin for any abnormal appearing moles or abnormal areas. It is advised that you do this once per year and at any time if you notice changes.

## **Cervical Cancer Screening**

### **What is a Pap Test?**

A Pap Test is an important screening test for cervical cancer. When a Pap test is done, some cells from the cervix (the opening to the uterus) are taken for examination. The cells are looked at for any changes that could lead to cancer.

### **Who should have Pap tests?**

If you are 25 years or older, have been sexually active and have a cervix, you need to have regular pap tests. Pregnant women and women who have sex with women also need regular Pap tests. Please talk to your primary care provider such as family physician or nurse practitioner about how often you should have a Pap test. Generally speaking you should have one every three years. If you do not have a primary care provider you can book a Pap test through a Well Woman Clinic (these are available in most areas of the province).

### **Where can I get a Pap test done?**

Pap tests can be done by your family doctor, a nurse practitioner, or a well woman clinic.

For a list of well woman clinics in your area, visit *Cancer Care Nova Scotia's* website at <http://www.nshealth.ca/service-details/Cervical%20Cancer%20Prevention%20Program> or call **1-888-480-8588**.

## **Colon Cancer Screening Program**

The Colon Cancer Prevention Program (CCPP) was developed by *Cancer Care Nova Scotia* with the goal of reducing the number of deaths from colon cancer in Nova Scotia. It is a screening program designed to help find cancer and pre-cancerous growths in Nova Scotians aged 50-74. If these growths are found early, colon cancer can be prevented.

### **Every two years, Nova Scotians between the ages of 50-74 will be sent a colon cancer screening kit in the mail.**

If you did not receive your kit call Cancer Care Nova Scotia at **1-866-599-2267** to receive one.

## **Prostate Cancer Screening**

*Cancer Care Nova Scotia* encourages all men to understand their risk for prostate cancer. Talk to your primary care provider such as family physician or nurse practitioner about the recommendations for prostate cancer screening. For more information about prostate cancer screening go to <https://library.nshealth.ca/Cancer/Prostate>.