

Cancer Kōrero

The more we talk about it,
The more we know about it



West Coast
District Health Board

Te Poari Hauora a Rohe o Tai Poutini



www.wcdhb.health.nz

WHAKATAUKĪ

Ehara taku i toa takitahi engari,
he toa takitini.

My strength is not the strength of one,
it is the strength of many.



Through being well informed about cancer we have a head start on knowing the truth. We can then be prepared to care for our own tinana (body), but also tautoko (support) whānau (family) or friends going through it.

Contact

Cancer Nurse Coordinator - Ph or text: 0278 389 689

Oncology Nurses - OncologyNurses@westcoastdhb.health.nz

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TATAURANGA

Facts and figures

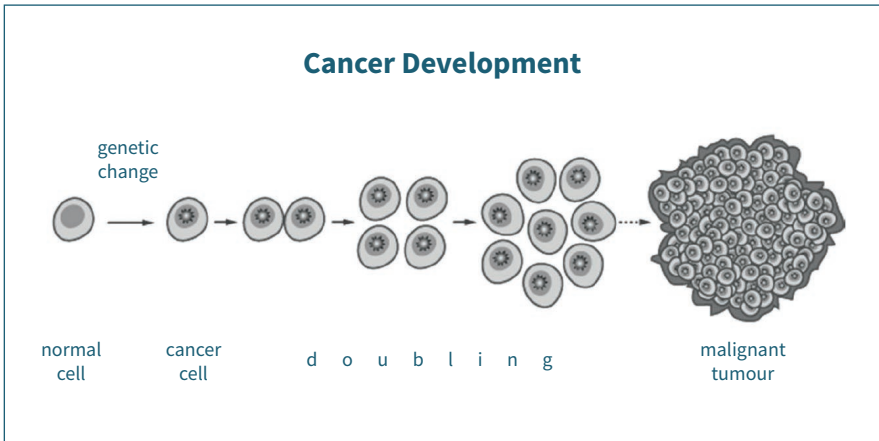
1. The leading cancer causing death in Māori women in Te Tai o Poutini (West Coast) is **digestive organ (stomach)**
2. The leading cause of cancer for Māori men in New Zealand causing death is **lung and digestive organ (stomach, small intestine and oesophagus)**
3. In Te Tai o Poutini, what is the cancer that affects Māori men the most?
Prostate, digestive organ and lung
4. In Te Tai o Poutini, what is the cancer that affects Māori women the most?
Digestive organ
5. The approximate Māori population in Te Tai o Poutini is **3,900** (12 per cent Māori in this region)
6. What is the total population of Te Tai o Poutini? **32,850**
7. Māori women are **47 per cent** more likely to get cancer, compared to non-Māori women
8. Among West Coast men, **cancer mortality is twice as high** for Māori compared to non-Māori.

HE AHA TE MATEPUKUPUKU

What is cancer?

Normal body cells grow and divide, but they know when to stop growing and they die and get replaced. Cancer cells don't know when to stop growing and divide out of control and don't die when they're supposed to.

Cancer is when cells that are not normal, grow and spread very fast and form a malignant tumour.



There are **two types of tumour** (said tew-ma):

- **Malignant** (said mar-lig-nant) which is cancer
- **Benign** (said be-nine) which is not cancer.

A growing tumour becomes a lump of cancer cells that can go on to destroy the normal cells around it. Some of these tumour cells can break away and travel to other parts of the body where it starts up in a new place. This is called **metastasis** (said me-tass-tar-sis).

WHAKATŪPATO

Warning signs

There are a lot of whānau that just leave things far too late and unfortunately the outcome has not been good for them. Don't do that to yourself or your whānau, please!

You know your body better than anyone. If you notice things changing or happening that aren't usual for you, please see a doctor.

Ongoing changes such as:

- Unexpected weight loss
- Change in appetite and/or difficulty getting food down
- Fatigue (feeling weak, being constantly tired, or lacking energy)
- Unusual lumps or swelling in your testicle, breast or elsewhere
- Changes in bowel movement pattern and consistency
- Cough that won't go away
- Difficulty having a mimi (passing urine)
- Heavy night sweats
- Breast or nipple changes
- Unexplained vaginal bleeding or discharge
- Sores that won't heal
- Pain that doesn't improve.

It is so important to always go to the doctor as soon as you notice any of these unusual changes.

Please talk with your doctor if you have had close whānau members (brothers, sisters, mother, father, cousins, aunties, uncles) with cancer. This may mean we need to be more watchful for any specific changes in your body as a cancer risk can be higher for you.

If nothing the doctor has given you is helping — then go back or see another doctor.

Please take someone with you if you are needing extra support and comfort.

WHAKATĀHARAHARA

How to reduce your risk of cancer

You can reduce your risk by:

- Being smokefree
- Eating a diet high in fruit and vegetables and low in saturated fat and sugar
- Being a healthy weight
- Being regularly physically active
- Follow low-risk guidelines if you drink alcohol
- Being SunSmart—avoiding over-exposure to ultraviolet radiation (UVR) from the sun and sun beds
- Undertaking recommended screening for different cancers.

MATEPUKUPUKU WAIPIRO

Alcohol and cancer

Many of us don't know that drinking alcohol increases the risk of developing cancers of the mouth, upper throat, voicebox, food-pipe, bowel, liver and breast. Also, there is some evidence that alcohol increases the risk of stomach and pancreatic cancer.

If you combine smoking with drinking, your risk of cancer increases significantly.

Ways to reduce your alcohol-related cancer risk:

- **Do** more activities that don't involve drinking
- **Delay** drinking for as long possible
- **Reduce** the amount of alcohol you drink and drink less often
- **Switch** to low strength alcoholic drinks

When you smoke and drink:

Drinking and smoking together, rather than just drinking or just smoking increases the cancer risk even more.



MATEPUKUPUKU HIKARETI

Smoking and cancer

Healthy lungs



Smoker's lungs



Smoking increases the risk of getting cancer. The link between smoking and cancer is very clear after years of research both here in New Zealand and internationally. One quarter of New Zealand's cancer deaths are caused by smoking.

Smoking is linked to many types of cancer including:

- lung
- oesophagus
- mouth
- upper throat
- pancreas
- bladder
- bowel
- larynx
- kidney
- stomach
- liver
- leukaemia
- ovary
- cervix

Smoking kills about 5000 people per year. Breathing in second-hand smoke (from other people's smoking) kills about 400 people per year.

Smoking delays healing and can impact your recovery after cancer surgery.

It's never too late though! Things you can do:

- Become smokefree—call Quitline for advice and support to help you. Quitline can assess what would be best suited to you and provide an exchange card for nicotine patches or gum to help you quit
- Avoid other people's smoke
- Have a smokefree home and waka (car)
- Ask your friends and whānau to be good examples and not smoke around the children.



QUIT SMOKING

We are here to help you!



West Coast DHB Stop Smoking counsellors

Westport and Reefton: (03) 788 9238

Greymouth and Hokitika: (03) 769 7488

More information - [Smoking cessation](#)

Oranga Hā – Tai Poutini

This free service provides personalised support to West Coasters who want to quit smoking.



Phone. 0800 456 121

Email: StopSmokingGreymouth@cdhb.health.nz

or Email: StopSmokingWestport@cdhb.health.nz

Web: stopsmokingwestcoast.org.nz

Coast Quit Programme

Contact your GP, practice nurse or community pharmacy for up to eight sessions of support and medication to help you stop smoking. There may be a small cost of \$2.50 per visit.



KAI

Healthy choices

There is convincing evidence that being overweight or obese increases the risk of developing some of the most common cancers.

It is likely that eating more fruit and vegetables will reduce the risk of developing some cancers. Choose plenty of vegetables and fruits in a variety of colours every day.

The guidelines for reducing cancer risk are the same as guidelines for cancer survivors, cardiovascular disease prevention, diabetes prevention as well as general good health.

No particular foods or eating patterns are guaranteed to prevent cancer; however, some foods and eating patterns can reduce your risk.

More information – **[Heart Foundation of New Zealand](#)**

KORI TINANA

Physical activity

Being physically active on most days is an important part of being healthy.

Many people know that being active helps prevent heart disease, diabetes, stroke and weight gain, but they do not always realise it is also important for reducing cancer risk.

For cancer prevention the scientific evidence suggests the more physical activity you do the better. Recent research suggests you need to do 60 minutes or more of moderate activity or 30 minutes of vigorous activity every day:

- Moderate intensity activity causes a 'slight but noticeable increase in breathing and heart rate'
- Vigorous activity makes you 'huff and puff'.

For more information, visit the Cancer Society website: www.cancernz.org.nz/



WHAKATEWHATEWHA

Early detection is your best protection

Screening is not able to provide a definite 'yes' or 'no' answer to the question, 'do I have cancer'.

A positive result does not mean you definitely have cancer; rather your risk is higher and you need further investigation to determine whether you may or may not have cancer. A negative result does not mean you are definitely cancer free. It just means that cancer has not been detected at that time, but does not mean that it may not develop in the future.

Breast screening

Breast cancer (mate pukupuku o ngā Ū) is the most common cancer in New Zealand for women. Every year, about 2300 New Zealand women are diagnosed with breast cancer and about 620 die from it.

New Zealand has one of the highest breast cancer rates in the world. It is not clear why.

- Free breast screening for women aged 45–69 years is provided by the national breast screening programme, BreastScreen Aotearoa
- The aim of breast screening is to find very small cancers before a lump can be felt in the breast. Early treatment has the best chance of success
- The risk of developing breast cancer increases with age. Breast cancer is uncommon in women under 50
- Although breast cancer is uncommon in women under 50, all women need to look for any unusual lumps and changes to the breast through doing self-examinations regularly. Seeing a GP promptly with any concerns will be hugely beneficial to ensure early diagnosis
- For older women, breast screening using mammography (breast X-rays) followed by appropriate treatment is the best way of reducing the chance of dying from breast cancer.





FREE FOR WOMEN
Aged 45–69 years
0800 270 200

Mammography screening:

- Detects cancer but cannot prevent it
- Does not guarantee that cancer is not present
- Reduces the risk of dying from breast cancer but does not eliminate it
- Most of the available information is directed at women. While it is rare, men are also affected by breast cancer
- Approximately 25 men in New Zealand are diagnosed with breast cancer each year
- It is more common in men over 60, but as for women it is encouraged that all men look regularly for breast changes and see their GP about any concerns.

Prostate screening

All men have a prostate. The prostate is a small walnut-shaped gland that surrounds the bladder opening.

If prostate cancer (mate pukupuku repe tātea) is found early, it can usually be cured. Prostate cancer is the most common cancer found in men. If caught early, prostate cancer can be managed well and can usually be cured.

Māori men are more likely to die of prostate cancer than non-Māori, usually because the cancer is found too late to cure.



PROSTATE CHECKLIST FOR MEN

YES/NO

I am having a mimi more often.	
When I mimi, I have trouble getting started or stopping.	
I have a poor mimi flow or I dribble.	
I often get up at night to have a mimi.	
I have blood in my mimi.	
I have pain in my lower back, hips or ribs.	
I have a family history of prostate cancer and I'm 40 years old or more.	
I am 50 to 70 years old.	
I am concerned or want to know more.	

Answering yes to any of these points may not mean you have cancer but you should be checked by your doctor, nurse or health professional straight away. When deciding about a prostate check, you may want to talk to a member of your whānau and a trusted health professional (doctor or nurse).

HELPLINE: 0800 4 PROSTATE (0800 477 678)

Checking your risk of prostate cancer:

Checks usually involve a blood test called a prostate-specific antigen test (**PSA**) and a digital rectal examination (**DRE**).

The prostate gland makes **PSA**. The higher the level of **PSA**, the more likely it is to be a sign of cancer.

DRE—this is a quick way for your doctor to check whether there may be a problem with your prostate. To feel the surface of your prostate, the doctor will place a gloved finger into your rectum (bottom). You are more likely to have prostate cancer if your prostate feels rough, hard or irregular.

A prostate check aims to reduce your chances of being harmed or dying from prostate cancer. While the PSA blood test and the DRE may be uncomfortable, there is no risk from having them. They do not harm you in any way.

Testicular cancer

Testicular cancer is the most common cancer for men aged 15–39. Testicular cancer is the presence of cancer cells or a cancerous growth in or on the testicles. It is very treatable if caught early. Monthly self-examinations are recommended.

Not all lumps in the testicles are cancerous, but it's recommended that if anything unusual is noticed that you see a doctor about this as soon as possible. Men that were born with undescended testes are more at risk, but there is no further known cause of testicular cancer. Māori men have considerably higher rates of testicular cancer than non-Māori men.

To find out more about how to do self-examinations, symptoms and diagnosis go to: www.menshealthnz.org.nz or phone 0800 660 800

Cervical screening

Cervical cancer (mate pukupuku waha kōpū) is highly preventable through cervical screening every three years.

CERVICAL SCREENING NZ: 0800 729 729

He huarahi whakamaru mō te wharetangata, mō te iwi.

A way of protection for the womb, and for the future of all.

Cervical cancer is caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV), a common sexually transmitted infection. There is no medication for HPV infections, but most infections will clear on their own.

A few 'high-risk' types of HPV may lead to abnormal (precancerous) cells.

The HPV infection can cause cancer in both men and women. Immunisation is available in the HPV vaccine which protects against nine strains of HPV responsible for cervical and some other cancers, and genital warts.

Protection is long lasting, so immunisation at age 11 or 12 protects well into adulthood. Children are offered the HPV vaccine in Year 7 or Year 8. It is delivered through schools or your GP.



ME HAERE NGĀ WĀHINE KATOA?

Who needs a smear test?

All women who have ever been sexually active are advised to have a smear test every three years from the time they turn 20 until they turn 70.

KIA TŪPATO KI TĒNEI NGĀNGARA

Be aware of HPV

- Cervical cancer is caused by a virus called human papillomavirus or HPV which is sexually transmitted. HPV affects almost all people at some point in their lives
- There are many types of HPV, but only a few types will cause cell changes in the cervix. These changes can return to normal or they may later become cancer if not treated
- Having regular smear tests every three years is the best way of finding and treating any cell changes and preventing cervical cancer from developing
- Women who have received the HPV vaccine must continue to have cervical smear tests.

HE AHA TE UTU?

What does a smear test cost?

Some Māori providers or community or primary health organisations offer a free or low cost service. If you are Māori or a Pacific Islander please ask about cost as often it will be free. Otherwise you may be charged the usual fee from your doctor or nurse.

HE PĒHEA TE ĀHUA O TE WHAKAMĀTAUTAU?

What happens during the test?

Having a smear only takes a few minutes. Some women find it a little uncomfortable, but it should not hurt.

A few cells will be collected from your cervix (the neck of the womb) and placed into a liquid solution that preserves the cells for testing. The test looks for abnormal cells. Any abnormal cells are treated to stop them from becoming cancer.

In some situations, women having a cervical smear test will also be offered an HPV test, which tests for the virus that may lead to cervical cancer. The HPV test is performed on the same sample as the smear test, so there is no need to have a second test.

KIA MŌHIO NOA IHO KOE

Just so you know

Smear tests are the best way of showing cell changes in the cervix. However, occasionally cell changes may be missed and a normal result given. The missed changes will usually be picked up in the next three yearly smear test.

Sometimes a result may show abnormal cells when all is actually well. Another smear may be taken and will usually show that no treatment is needed.

ME MAUMAHARA

Remember

See your doctor if you have:

- Bleeding or spotting between menstrual periods
- Bleeding or spotting after sexual intercourse
- Bleeding or spotting after your menstrual periods have stopped (after menopause)
- Persistent pain in your pelvis
- Pain during sexual intercourse
- Unusual discharge from the vagina; the discharge might be smelly, have changed colour from white to pink, brown, or green, or be streaked with blood.

These symptoms can happen for several reasons and rarely mean that you have cervical cancer. However, they should be checked by your doctor.



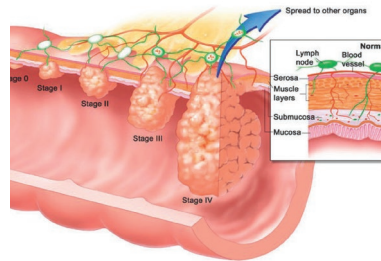
Bowel screening

A free national bowel screening programme has started in some areas, with all areas expected to be covered by 2020/2021.

Screening involves testing for bowel cancer (mate whēkau pukupuku) in people who do not have any obvious symptoms of the disease. The aim is to find cancer or pre-cancer early when it is easier to treat. Screening is important because bowel cancer can develop without any early warning symptoms. Bowel cancer can be treated successfully if detected in its early stages. iFOBT stands for 'immunochemical faecal occult blood test' which is used to detect unseen blood in bowel motions. Doing an iFOBT every two years can reduce the risk of dying from bowel cancer by up to one third.

Common signs and symptoms of bowel cancer:

- diarrhoea
- constipation
- feeling that your bowel doesn't empty completely
- blood in your bowel motion.



If you have any of these symptoms, you need to see your doctor.

In the early stages, bowel cancer may not show any symptoms at all. That is why it's important for people to take part in the FREE bowel screening programme. Someone diagnosed with bowel cancer while it's in its early stages has a 90 per cent chance of being treated successfully. Bowel cancer develops slowly. So, being screened every two years is a good idea. If you develop symptoms between screening the test should pick these up.

Please note: this screening is not yet available in our area but will be in the near future. See your GP if you have symptoms that concern you.

MATEPUKUPUKU KUPU

Words related to cancer—what do they mean?

Biopsy A biopsy is when a sample of cells or tissues are removed from the patient to be looked at under a microscope and studied to see if there are any signs of disease. You can have a biopsy to test for many diseases, not just cancer.

Benign A benign tumour is harmless; it does not spread.

Chemotherapy/‘Chemo’ Chemotherapy means treatment with medicine. When cancer is treated with chemotherapy, the person takes medicine in either a tablet, intravenous or injection form. The chemicals in the medicine are designed to attack and kill the cancer cells.

Carcinogens Carcinogens are substances that can cause genes to mutate.

Colonoscopy Colonoscopy is a procedure in which a trained specialist uses a long, flexible, narrow tube with a light and tiny camera on one end (endoscope) to look inside your rectum and bowel. Colonoscopy can show irritated and swollen tissue, ulcers, polyps and cancer.

CT/CAT scan (Computerised Axial Tomography scan) The CT scan is like a clever camera that can take X-ray pictures from all over the body, and put them together on a computer to make a 3D image. The patient lies on a bed that moves through a tunnel. Inside the tunnel is the scanner which takes the pictures.

Digital Rectal Examination (DRE) The doctor will insert a gloved finger into the rectum to feel any abnormalities in the prostate gland.

Endoscopy An endoscopy is a procedure where a long tube that has a camera on the end (endoscope) is inserted into your body so that the camera can look inside.

Laparoscopy A laparoscope is a long tube with a camera at one end and an eye piece at the other. It is like an endoscope. During a laparoscopy small cuts are made in the patient’s abdomen through which the laparoscopy enters the body so that the doctor can see inside.

Malignant Cancer is caused by cells in our bodies continuing to divide when they should have stopped. The dividing cells create a lump that is called a tumour. There are two types of tumours. One is cancerous, and the other is harmless (benign). A malignant tumour is cancerous.

MATEPUKUPUKU KUPU

Words related to cancer—what do they mean?...

Mammogram A mammogram is the test that women have to try and find/detect breast cancer early. The mammogram machine compresses the breast between two plates and pictures are taken of the breast tissue.

Metastasis A cancer mass in a part of the body away from where it originated. Tumour cells can break away and travel to other parts of the body where they start up in a new place.

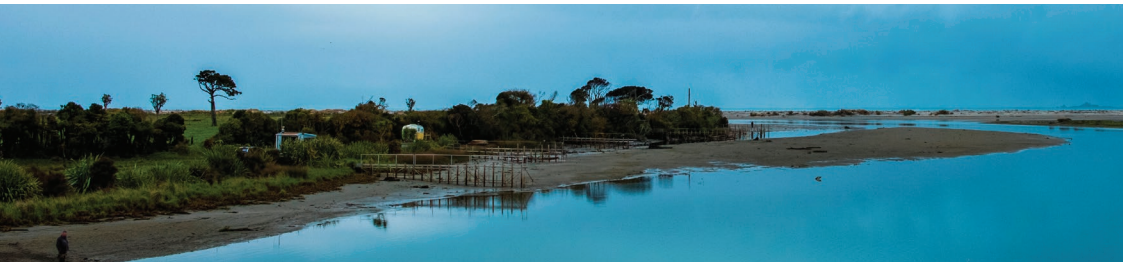
MRI scan (Magnetic Resonance Imaging scan) An MRI scan uses magnets to create an image of a body on a computer. It may take slightly longer than 30 minutes to do the MRI scan and the patient has to lie very still inside a metal cylinder. The machine is very loud and so patients are usually asked to wear ear plugs. Doctors prefer to use the MRI scan when looking at blood, the head and muscles as it produces clearer pictures than the CT scan for these areas.

PET (Positron Emission Tomography) PET is an imaging technique which uses small amounts of radioactive tracers in a glucose (sugar) solution to obtain high definition scan images of specific areas or the whole of the body. It is used to help diagnose, locate and assess a disease.

Radiotherapy/Radiation Therapy Radiotherapy is when radiation is used to kill cancer cells. The area where the cancer is in the body is identified and then the radiation machine beams are directed at this area.

Staging This term is a way of describing the extent of a cancer, how big the tumour is and if and where it has spread to. This helps doctors decide on the best course of treatment.

Ultrasound test An ultrasound test uses a microphone to make sound waves that create a picture of a body on a computer. The microphone is passed over the body on top of a transparent gel that has been put on the patient's skin while the patient lies down.



HAPORI TAUPUHIPUHI

Community supports

Your first line of support is to talk with someone you can trust: partner, parent, friend, aunty, cousin, neighbour.

Some other great support available is:



cancerchatnz.org.nz
www.cancerchatnz.org.nz



peer support
0800 CANCER (226 237) to register



- Your own **GP or practice nurse** or health professional
You can call your general practice team 24/7 for advice. After hours follow the instructions on the answerphone to be put through to a nurse for free health advice. If it is an emergency dial 111.
- **‘Hei oranga ki te whānau o Te Tau Ihu o Te Waka-a- Māui’** which means **‘Healthy whānau across the top of the South Island’**
0800 ORANGA (0800672642)
- **Cancer Information Helpline**
0800 CANCER | 0800 226 237
or email a cancer information nurse
info@cancersoc.org.nz
<https://cancernz.org.nz/>

WHA KARĀPOPOTO

Summary

The not-so-good news is:

- Adjusting to life with cancer can be challenging
- Some cancer treatments can be tough, but sticking with them will help in the long term
- The longer you leave it to see a doctor, the higher risk you are at of not surviving cancer
- Living on the West Coast means you sometimes need to travel to Christchurch hospitals to access some treatments, but you can sometimes take a whānau member with you for free.

The good news is:

- At least one third of all cancer cases are preventable
- Cancer cells often can be treated and destroyed
- There are so many medications and treatments available for cancer now that weren't around a few years ago
- There is heaps of information and support available to you
- There are very good cancer services in this region
- Faster Cancer Treatment programme is a key focus for the government. Getting prompt treatment is more likely to ensure better outcomes for our whānau.

Useful websites:

- www.wcdhb.health.nz/health-services/cancer-support/ - West Coast District Health Board
- www.cancersociety.org.nz - New Zealand Cancer Society
- www.health.govt.nz/your-health/conditions-and-treatments/diseases-and-illnesses/cancer - Ministry of Health
- www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/national-cancer-programme - Ministry of Health
- www.cancertreatments.co.nz - Cancer Treatment Options New Zealand
- www.breastcancerfoundation.org.nz - Breast Cancer Foundation New Zealand
- www.cancercouncil.com.au/1in3cancers - this is a great little quiz to do online to see what you may need to alter to reduce the risk of cancer
- www.timetoscreen.nz/ - Ministry of Health



West Coast
- District Health Board -

Te Poari Hauora a Rohe o Tai Poutini

www.wcdhb.health.nz

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