

THE MANUAL

**FOR MEN ON CANCER PREVENTION
AND EARLY DETECTION**

**Power for
Powerful Men**

**REDUCING
THE RISKS**

Mister Myths
What you think
you know about cancer

Your Top Mechanic
GETTING THE BEST FROM YOUR GP VISIT

Department of Health and Human Services
Cancer Screening and Control Services

Man and His Machine

An introduction...

Man #1 has been around for a very long time.

As the proud owner of the latest model you'll be keen to keep it in top condition. With a little care your high performance machine will last you a long lifetime with minimal need for maintenance or spare parts. But like any sophisticated piece of high technology, your body will respond best to a basic understanding of what goes on underneath the bonnet.

In truth, men are more likely to look after their cars than their own bodies. Of course roadworthiness is required by law but there is no such equivalent for the driver.

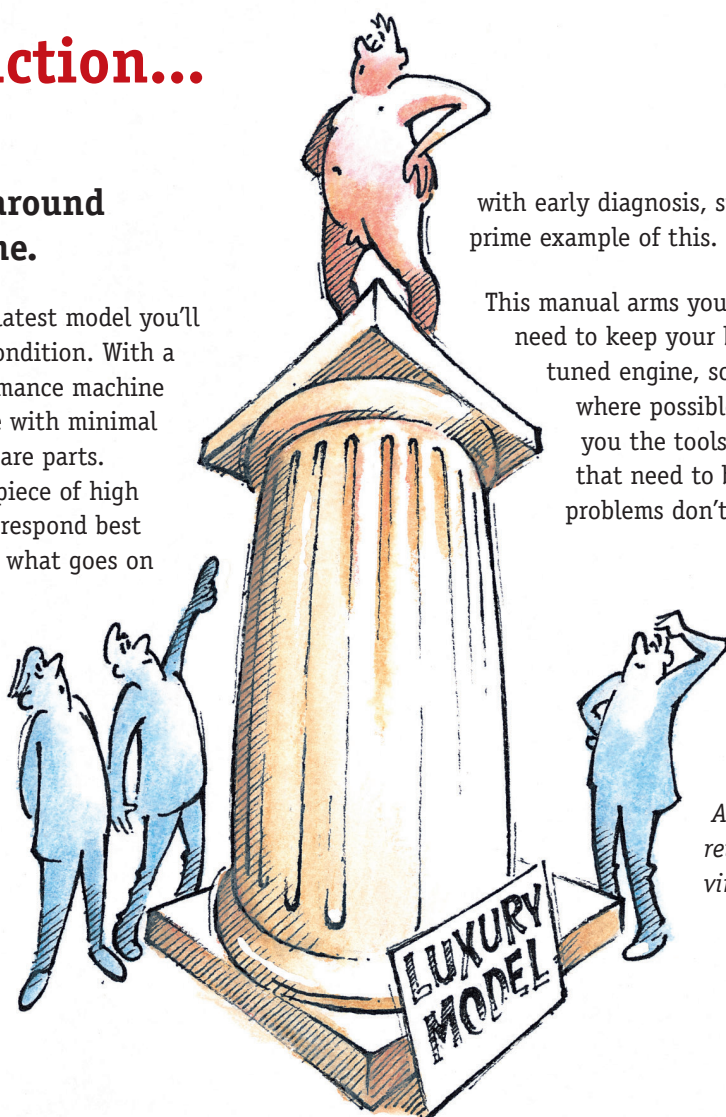
However, many illnesses can be prevented and

with early diagnosis, successfully treated. Cancer is a prime example of this.

This manual arms you with the information you need to keep your body humming like a finely tuned engine, so you can reduce your risk, and where possible, prevent cancer. It also gives you the tools to notice early warning signs that need to be checked out, so that little problems don't become big problems.

By following the guidelines in this manual you can be more than just a standard model. You can be more, much more. You can be a highly tuned man machine.

And you might just reach retirement age as a highly prized vintage model in A1 order.



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MISTER MYTHS

Remember the old myth that cars can run on water? Then they found out engines actually do work better in the rain because damp air makes the fuel burn more efficiently.

Well, cancer has its own myths and old wives tales. It turns out that some of these myths are partly true – but others are definitely false...

? Living under power lines causes cancer:
Although a popular view, there is no evidence for this.

? Pesticides cause cancer:
A long runner this one but without good support. What we do know is there are clear links between many industrial chemicals and some cancers. So if you work with these chemicals, wear protective gear.

? Mobile phones cause brain tumours:
Not proven, but the monthly bills can be pretty life threatening!

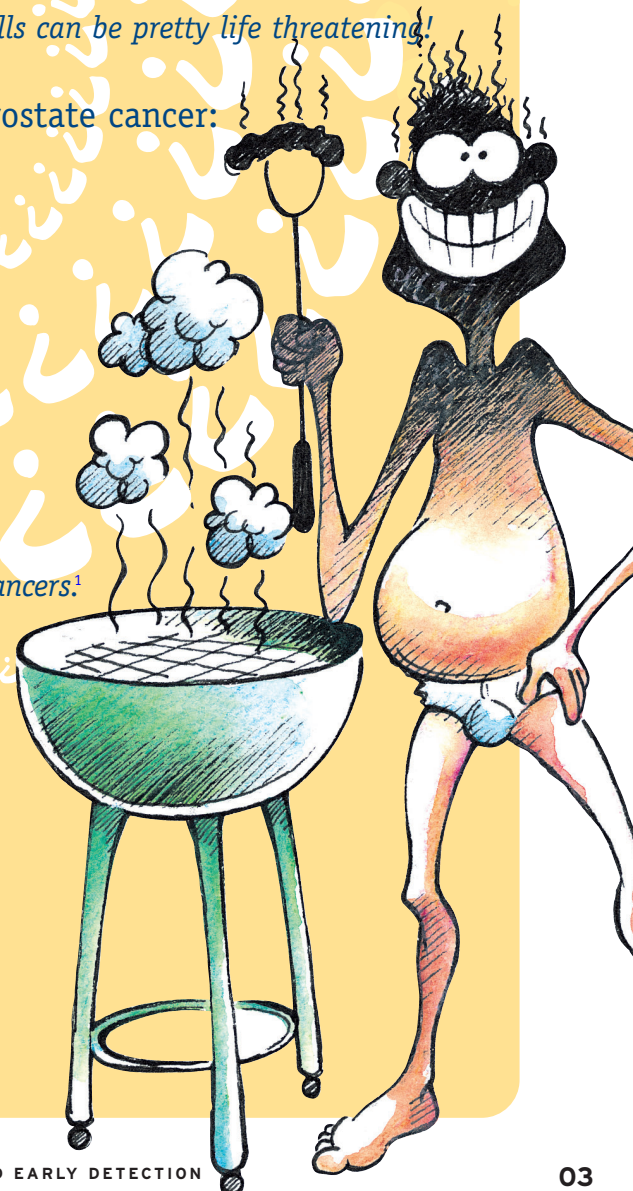
? Masturbation causes testicular or prostate cancer:
Definitely false!

? Tight underpants cause testicular cancer:
False and yet falsetto.

? Regularly eating burnt meat cooked on a BBQ won't increase your risk for cancer:
Some research suggests that eating burnt meat regularly may increase your risk of developing some cancers.¹

? Men don't get breast cancer:
Sadly untrue, but it is quite rare.

? Women have prostates but they don't cause as much trouble:
A survey found that over 50% of men believe women have prostates. But it's false. Which is great news, otherwise two people might have to get up in the middle of the night for a pee!



What are the Odds?

Your risks explained...

Some dangers to health and life are very serious but the risk of actually suffering from them may be very small. These risks can be difficult to work out. It can also be very confusing trying to compare risks.

For example, the risk of being killed by lightening in Australia is 1 in 10 million. This doesn't mean very much to most of us. So try thinking about it this way:

If there was a line of people 10,000 kilometres (6,210 miles) long, only one person in the line would be killed by lightening. It would take 4 months of continuous walking to reach the end of the line.²

On the other hand, if you start smoking as a teenager and do not quit you have a 1 in 2 chance of dying earlier³. It would take you less than a second to walk to the end of this line!

Now it starts to make sense.

Reducing your risks

You cannot easily avoid some of the risks to your health. Many risks are so small it makes little sense to try to avoid them.

But there are some very high risks that are partly or totally avoidable.

Tobacco smoking is a good example. There is a real and significant risk in inhaling other people's smoke (passive smoking). But you can often avoid passive

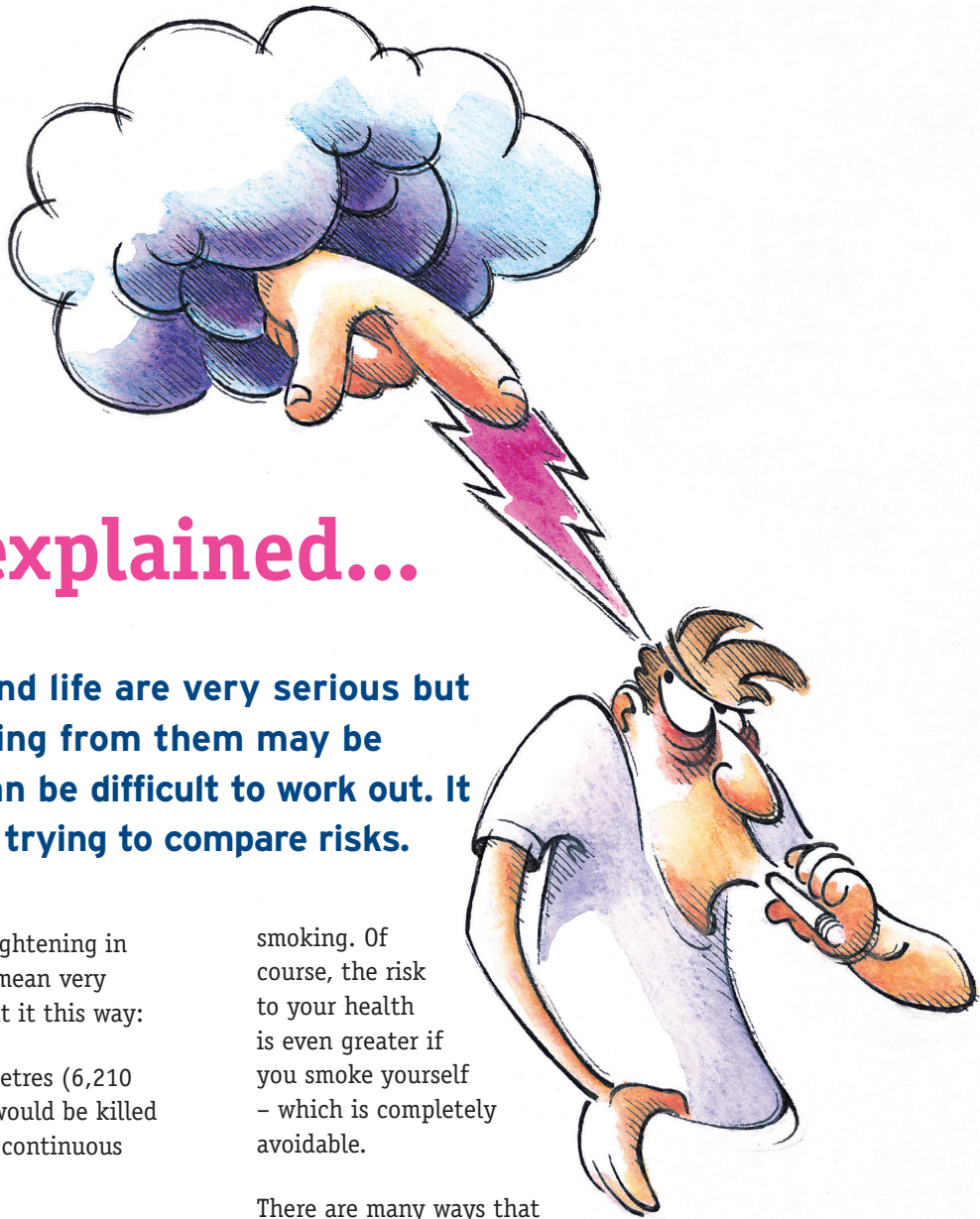
smoking. Of course, the risk to your health is even greater if you smoke yourself – which is completely avoidable.

There are many ways that you can avoid risks to your health – either partly or totally. But the BIG Five are the most important:

- **What you eat**
- **What you drink**
- **Whether you smoke**
- **How active you are**
- **How you look after yourself in the sun**

You can reduce your risk by:

- having regular GP check-ups; and
- being more aware of early signs and symptoms of ill health.



POWER

FOR POWERFUL MEN

Reducing your risk of cancer

DRINKING IT...

High-octane fuel: low performance

Nothing's sadder than a foot hard down on the pedal and nothing happens.

The great myth is that alcohol improves performance. Not so.

HOW MUCH?

*Aim for no more than
two standard drinks a day⁴*

*(A 375ml can of full strength beer
= 1.5 standard drinks)*

Alcohol is high in gut-adding calories, and it's linked to cancer, liver conditions, high blood pressure and of course, failing to rise to the occasion.

But who said anything about giving up?

Instead, try switching to soft drinks, non alcoholic beers or shandies as the evening goes on - or have a few glasses of water in between to help keep you in top gear for the whole night.



You might be in the right condition to see that your mates are doing exactly the same thing for the same reason.

EATING IT...

Fuel Foods

Vegetables, fruits, pulses (peas and beans) and wholegrain bread, brown rice or durum wheat pasta, help keep energy flowing without piling on the weight. And as they are lower in calories and higher in fibre, they can also help prevent you from developing cancer.

The great thing is they make you feel as though you have a full tank so you're less hungry.

CARBS FOR YOUR ENGINE:

Carbohydrates are the power fuel. You put your foot down and have the energy to go.

Fats are more suited to tractors. Great for slow, heavy machinery. So remember fruit, vegetables and high fibre for maximum speed and energy.

Try to eat plenty of vegetables, legumes, fruit and cereals including breads, rice, pasta and noodles, preferably wholegrain.

Meat and potatoes anyone?

Not a vegetarian? No problem. You don't need to miss out on the meat option. Like many things in life lean meat is good for you in moderation. So if you go for a portion about the size of a deck of cards you will come up trumps.

Fat but fit?

Us guys eat too much fat. You can be fit and fat. But extra fat will still cause you problems such as high blood pressure and heart disease. It will also increase your risk of cancer.

IF YOU FANCY MEAT...

What's important is the mix of food on your plate. The ideal mix is one-third or less of meat, chicken or fish and two-thirds of vegetables and pasta or rice.

Not that all fat is bad. Some fat actually helps reduce your risk of heart disease and cancer. The amount and type that we eat makes all the difference. Saturated fat clogs the fuel lines so go for unsaturated fat and olive oil.

All packaged food sold in supermarkets must include a nutrition information panel showing the amount of: total fat (g), and saturated fat (g) per 100g and per serve.

When shopping for foods, look for the red Tick. Tick approved products must meet the Heart Foundation's strict standards on nutrients such as saturated fat, trans fat, sodium (salt), dietary fibre or vegetables.⁵

Revving it up

A stressful life often means you

Take away foods, sausage rolls, pastries, cakes and ready-made meals often contain high levels of saturated fat. Avoid adding fat to food when you cook at home. Try not to fry. Boil, bake or grill instead.

eat on your feet. Not all of us have the luxury of sit down meals during the day, but this doesn't mean the upright meal has to be downright dangerous. You can choose healthy foods that reduce your health risks. If you do, you'll also reduce your stress.

Supermarket or restaurant salad bars can be a green light for the man on the move. Gone are the days of boring dry leaves. The modern salad is crunchy, calorie light and currency easy.

Why watch television chefs when you can do better? Get a wok and reduce your workload. Throw in thin sliced vegetables, some lean meat and a light coating of olive oil and serve with rice. Presto! A TV meal. Follow up with fresh fruit in a bowl of yoghurt. If you cook like this, you can get a big meal with change out of \$15.



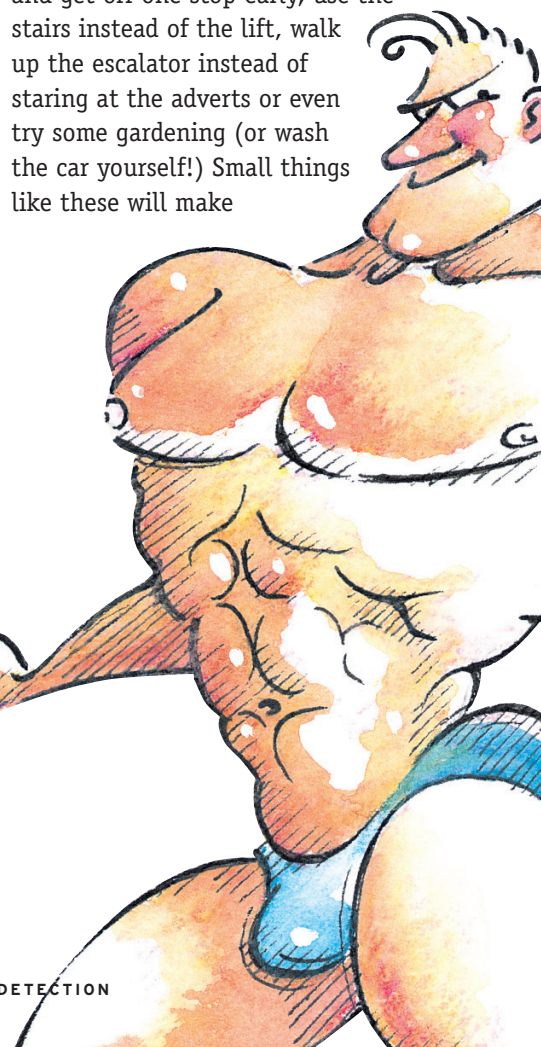
KEEPING IT RUNNING...

Leaves you breathless

Getting fit doesn't mean you have to spend your time in a room full of machines last seen in the Chamber of Horrors. Many garages are full of rusting fitness equipment bought by well meaning men (or their partners).

Sport is a great way of keeping fit but most of us overestimate what we need to do to stay healthy. 30 minutes of physical activity each day helps to reduce your risk of developing heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, type II diabetes and cancer.⁶

But any activity is of some benefit whether at work, leisure or a sport. So try walking to the next bus stop and get off one stop early, use the stairs instead of the lift, walk up the escalator instead of staring at the adverts or even try some gardening (or wash the car yourself!) Small things like these will make



BE ACTIVE!

Aim for 30 minutes of physical activity per day – anything that makes the heart beat a little faster or brings a little sweat to your brow. You can spread the activity over one or more sessions. This will help keep the spare tyre away and the engine ticking over!

activity with your mates or kids that much easier and less embarrassing.

Being able to push-start the car without needing oxygen afterwards always looks good and being this fit can have a remarkable effect on the spare tyre too. Of course, keeping your weight under control also helps prevent cancer. If your waist size is over 94cm (37 inches) you have an increased risk of developing chronic disease, if it is over 102cm (40 inches) your risk is greatly increased (measurement is taken roughly half way between your lowest rib and the top of your hip bone).⁷

SMOKING IT...

Even filters won't stop this one.

Smoke should leave a finely tuned engine not enter it. The toxins in tobacco smoke can go everywhere in the body that the blood flows causing harm to nearly every organ and system of the body.⁸

Low tar products or filters only con you. The simple fact of the matter is that smoking kills, be it from cancer or heart disease. Not a lot of men know this, but smoking can also cause erectile dysfunction (one type of impotence). Perhaps that's why the film stars tend to smoke after the steamy love scene rather than before!

If you smoke 20 cigarettes a day, you will save around \$3,500 each year if you quit now. In 5 years you could buy a half decent car and in ten years a nice sports model! As the price of tobacco continues to rise, quitting could buy you a serious machine!

If you smoke, quitting is the most effective step you can take to reduce your risk of cancer – and not just lung cancer. So set a date to quit.

BURNING IT...

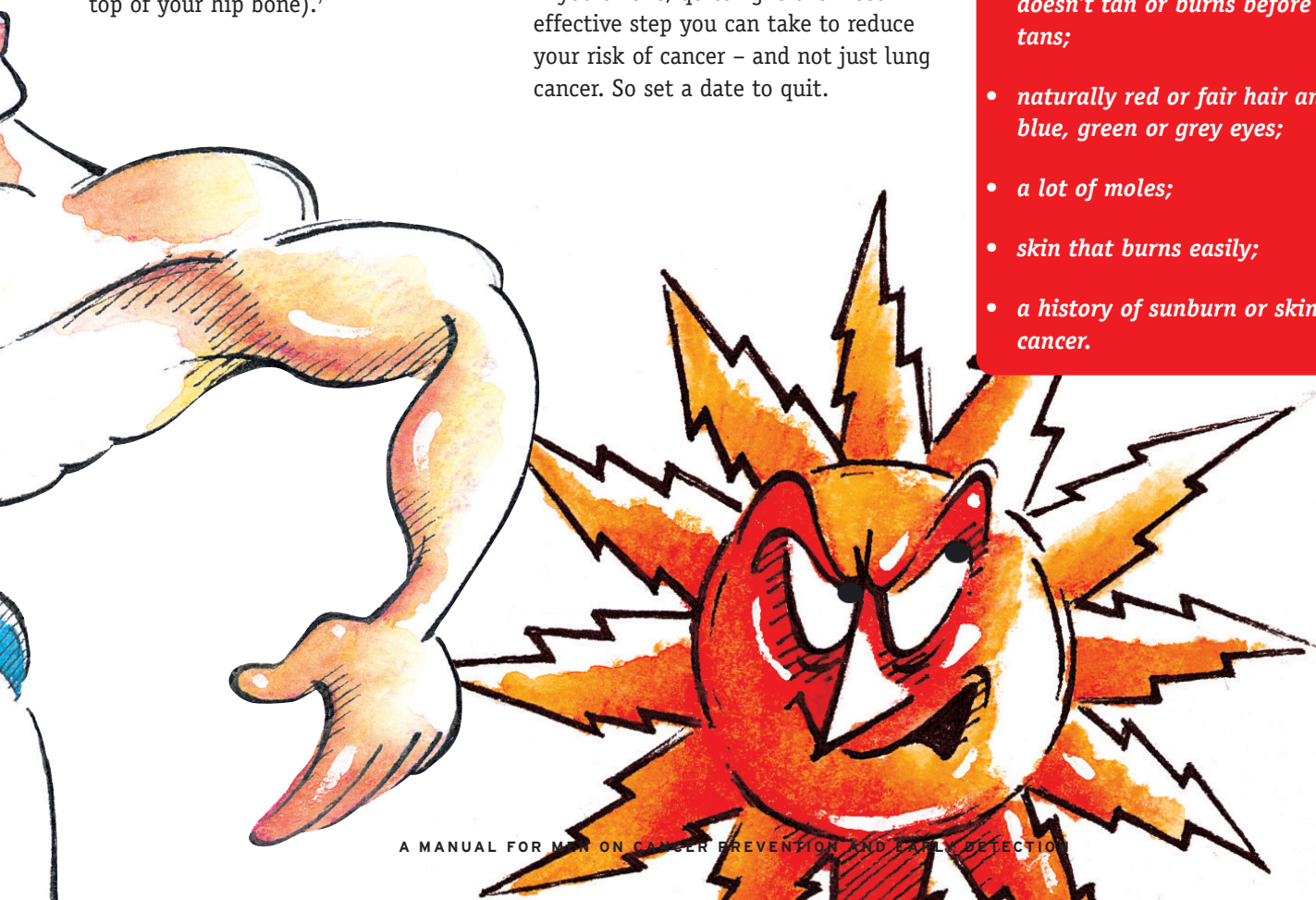
Australia has the highest levels of skin cancer in the world. It is almost always caused by over exposure to the sun, so protect your bodywork.

- Use high factor sunscreen (30+). Slap loads on **before** you head into the sun and reapply it every 2 hours and after you swim.
- Cover up, whether at work, play or on holidays.
- Get a hat, a big hat (to cover ears, nose and neck).
- Stay out of the midday sun. If you are outside, look for a nice bit of shade to relax or work in.
- Get those shades on to protect your (next) best assets – your eyes!

SUN SMART

Every man needs to be sun smart. But be extra careful both in Australia and abroad if you have:

- *pale or freckled skin that doesn't tan or burns before it tans;*
- *naturally red or fair hair and blue, green or grey eyes;*
- *a lot of moles;*
- *skin that burns easily;*
- *a history of sunburn or skin cancer.*



Only a fool keeps driving when the dashboard lights up like a Christmas tree! Ignoring the body's early warning signs is an equally bad idea. It could mean an early trip to the garage for some vital spare parts.



Being Roadworthy

DETECTING CANCER EARLY

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411 30003

Some regular DIY checks:

1 REGULAR SERVICING

Regular servicing keeps you safely on the road and can pick up faults before they become dangerous. Regular check-ups by your own GP can also pick up potential medical problems in the same way. It's a good opportunity to talk about any concerns you might have and check out your risks.

2 CHECK YOUR LOGBOOK

One careful driver on the logbook? Check out your family history of cancer, especially if either of your parents suffered from a particular cancer before 60. If you do have a parent who had cancer at a young age, check with your doctor what you can do to reduce your own risk. Your doctor may suggest regular testing, which can catch potential problems early. Many cancers are treated successfully if detected early. But remember prevention is better than cure so you should try to reduce your risks.

See page 5 to learn more.

3 KEEP A REGULAR EYE ON YOUR BODYWORK

■ Get to know your skin so that you'll more quickly recognise anything unusual such as:

- new lumps or growths
- a sore or bruise that does not heal
- a mole that changes in shape, size or colour or bleeds in unusual circumstances.

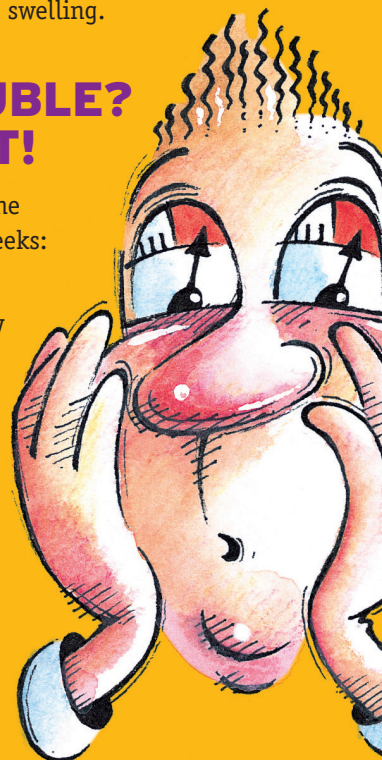
See page 13 to learn more.

■ Be aware of how your testicles usually feel and check them regularly for anything unusual such as a lump, thickening or swelling.

4 ENGINE TROUBLE? CHECK IT OUT!

Take action if you experience any of the following for more than a couple of weeks:

- A persistent cough or hoarseness
- Persistent indigestion or difficulty in swallowing
- Shortness of breath
- Significant weight loss (for no good reason)
- Loss of appetite
- A noticeable, persistent change in bowel or bladder habits, for no good reason



Many symptoms that might indicate cancer can also be caused by a less serious illness. But it's always better to be safe. So go see your doctor if in any doubt.



Faulty Fuel Injector

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT PROSTATE CANCER...

A man thing...

The prostate is a walnut sized gland that sits just under the bladder. Its job is to produce the bulk of semen to help protect and nourish sperm on their hazardous trip to the womb.

What causes it?

Nobody knows what causes prostate cancer, however there are some recognised risk factors:

■ **Birthdays:** Risk increases over the age of 50 years. Prostate cancer is rare in younger men. Either buy less candles for the cake or better still eat the candles and leave

the cake as a high fat diet may also be a risk factor.

■ **Family History:** If your father or brother had prostate cancer, your risk increases. If they had it at a young age, your risk is even higher.

■ **'Western diet':** High in animal fat and protein. Countries with low fat diets have low levels of prostate cancer.

■ **Obesity:** Being overweight is a major risk factor for all cancers.

Prostate cancer is not caused by vasectomy, injury, masturbation or reading mens magazines under the bedclothes with a torch. Just as well, or it could be teenagers suffering along with men predominantly aged over 50.

Happy Birthday

As men get older, their urine flow can become slower and the bladder needs to be emptied more often. This is usually due to the prostate gland getting bigger and putting pressure on the bladder. If you need to pee more often, it does not mean that you have prostate cancer. But it is important to see the doctor and rule it out. The earlier cancer is found the better the treatment outcomes.

Watch out for:

- *difficulty peeing with any kind of pressure;*
- *peeing more often than usual;*
- *getting up at night to have a pee only to get up again later on;*
- *a feeling that you haven't quite got rid of it all when you pee;*
- *stop-start peeing;*
- *discomfort or burning when peeing;*
- *blood in your pee or semen.*

Getting it sorted

Get used to hearing the acronym 'PSA'. It stands for 'Prostate Specific Antigen' and is a simple blood test. That's about as simple as it gets though. A higher than normal PSA level does not necessarily mean you have cancer, it can be caused by inflammation or a large but non-cancerous prostate. So before doing a PSA test talk with your GP about the meaning of the results in terms of possible treatment. Your doctor will usually carry out a Digital Rectal Examination (DRE) as well as a blood test for PSA. If the PSA levels are high your doctor may refer you for further tests.

[See page 10 to learn more.](#)

If further tests show that you have prostate cancer, the type of treatment will depend on your age, general health and the stage or grade of the cancer. Possible treatments include surgery, radiotherapy, hormone therapy and sometimes chemotherapy.

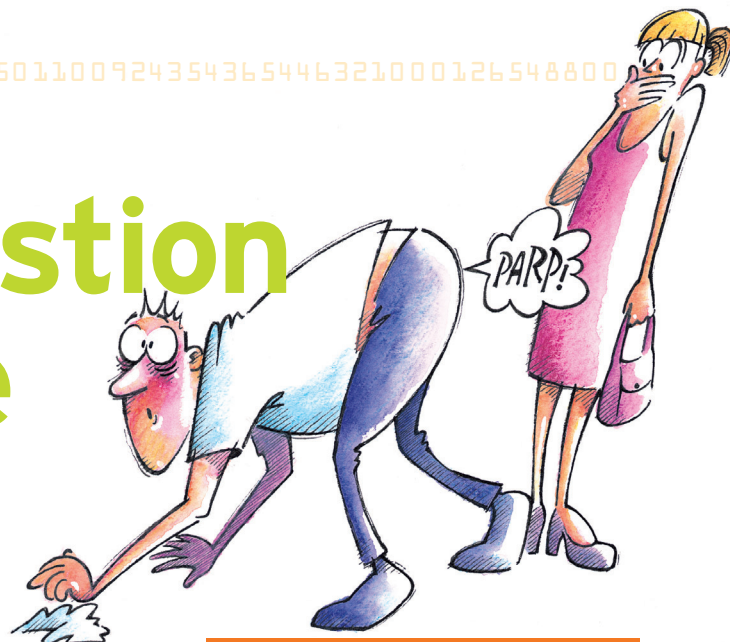
You may be able to reduce your risk by eating a well balanced diet with fresh fruit and vegetables.

The risk of a man getting prostate cancer is similar to that of a woman getting breast cancer.



Poor Combustion and Backfire

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT BOWEL CANCER...



The short and tall of it

The bowel is sometimes called the gut. It digests and absorbs food. Cancer more commonly appears in the large bowel and rectum, which is the very last part of the gut. Bowel cancer is common and treatable when it's caught early.

Causes of Bowel Cancer

The definite cause of bowel cancer is still a mystery. But we know some things do increase your risk. Your risk is higher if:

- you eat lots of junk food, fat and sugar and not enough fibre;
- someone in your close family had bowel cancer;
- you don't exercise;
- you're overweight;
- you smoke tobacco;
- you or a member of your family have a bowel condition called polyps or adenomatous polyposis. This can significantly increase your risk. Trying to pronounce it can be pretty stressful too!

The good news is you can reduce your risk, even if bowel cancer is in the family.

- Check out your diet. Reduce the amount of fat and sugars and eat more fruit, vegetables and fibre.
- Try to keep active regularly and keep your weight under control.

- Discuss your family history with your doctor. Your GP may advise more frequent tests.
- Quit smoking.

See page 11 to learn more.

Better sooner than later

Being 'bowel aware' is the name of the game. Guts play up at the best of times but there are some warning signs that you shouldn't ignore.

- bright or dark red flecks in your bowel motion;
- a change in the way your bowels are working, which lasts more than a month. This means diarrhoea, constipation or both;
- bleeding from the back passage or blood on the toilet paper;
- a regular bloated feeling, trapped wind or fullness;
- a feeling as though there is something left to pass even after you go to the toilet;
- pain or discomfort in your belly or back passage;
- weight loss for no good reason;
- increasing general tiredness or weakness.

Remember! These symptoms don't always mean cancer. But if you have any of them, see your doctor.

THE GLOVED FINGER...

Medical checks and treatments

Men die of embarrassment every single day in Australia. Yes having a Digital Rectal Examination (DRE) is not everyone's idea of a good day out but it can save your life. It is not painful and your doctor does them every day.

The National Bowel Cancer Screening Program (NBCSP) is to be phased in over a number of years, the reason for this is so that health services can meet any increases in demand.

People eligible to participate in the program will get an invitation in the mail to complete a simple test called a Faecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT) in the privacy of their own home and then mail the samples collected through to a laboratory for analysis. There is no cost involved in completing the NBCSP FOBT.

The FOBT TEST checks for blood in bowel movements as this can be a sign of bowel cancer, however a positive FOBT does not necessarily mean you have cancer.⁹

To learn more about the program go to www.cancerscreening.gov.au

Dodgy Air Filters

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT LUNG CANCER...

The Smoking Gun

It's not difficult to work out what causes lung cancer. If you don't smoke your chances of getting it are very small.

Start early, die early. The amount of tobacco you smoke moves you that bit closer to the great scrap yard in the sky.

Filters and low tar don't protect you. Wise up and stub out.

So should you go for pipes and cigars? No way, they just give you a feeling of false security. Smoking causes cancer.

Cut down then? That doesn't work either. You gradually creep back up. Stop completely.

FIRST THE GOOD NEWS

Quitting at any age has short and long term health benefits

Quit Plan

- List your reasons for quitting.
- Set a day and date to stop. Tell all your friends and relatives, they will support you.
- Get someone to quit with you. You will reinforce each other's will power.

- Clear the house and your pockets of any packets or lighters.
- Map out your progress on a chart or calendar. Keep the money you save in a separate container.
- If you get a craving, practice the 4 D's: **Drink water; Deep breathe; Distract yourself and Delay** grabbing for that smoke for 3 minutes (cravings can take this long to disappear).
- Ask your friends not to smoke around you. People accept this far more readily than they used to.

Watch out for:

- a persistent cough;
- coughing up blood-stained phlegm;
- shortness of breath;
- chest discomfort;
- repeated bouts of pneumonia or bronchitis;
- loss of appetite;
- loss of weight.

These don't necessarily mean you have cancer but they do need your doctor's attention.

If you have lung cancer, treatment depends on the type of cancer, how developed it is and your general state of health. Surgery, radiotherapy and chemotherapy may be used alone or together to treat lung cancer.

Remember! Early detection of lung cancer can make a difference in your chances of survival. If you have any of the symptoms listed above, see your doctor.

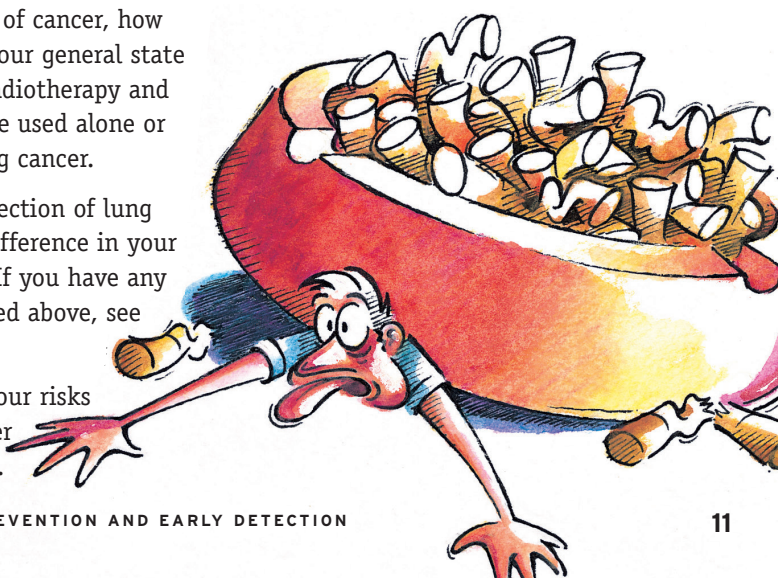
Better still, reduce your risks of getting lung cancer by stopping smoking.

ROADSIDE ASSISTANCE

HELP ON THE WAY TO QUITTING

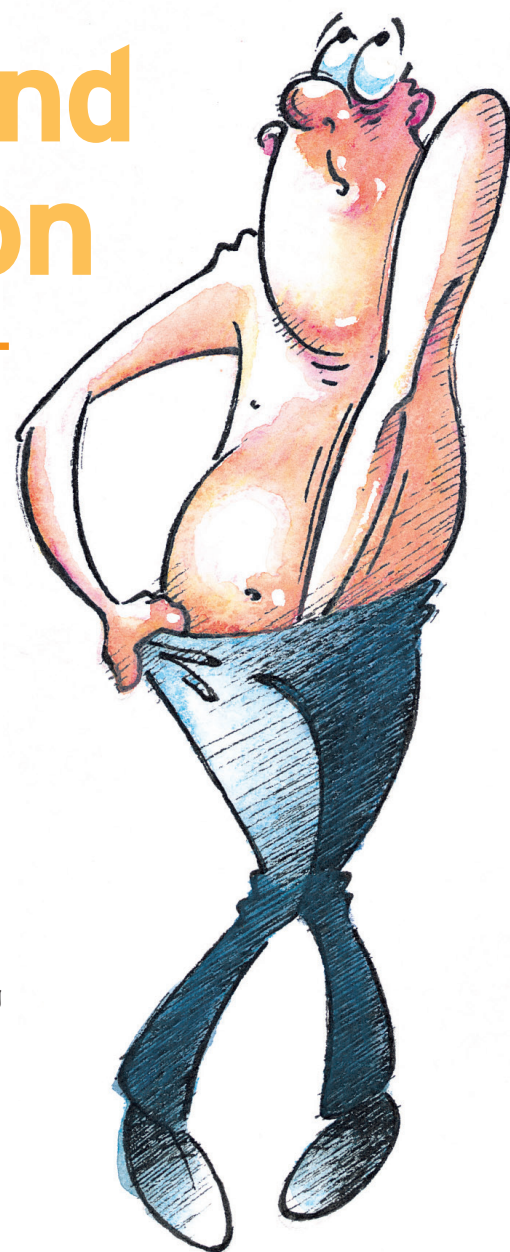
- *Try calling Quitline on 137848 (13QUIT). Quit's counsellors are on hand with a free advice kit and confidential advice and support. For more information you can visit the Quit website at www.quittas.org.au.*
- *Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) can be obtained through your GP or bought over the counter in a pharmacy. Used correctly it can be very successful in easing the cravings for nicotine. There are many types so make sure you discuss with your GP or pharmacist the best one for you.*
- *Get in touch with self-help groups or organisations that supply information and support.*
- *Ask your GP for advice on other methods that may help you quit.*

If you can't stop for yourself do it for your partner or kids.



Ball Bearings and Shot Suspension

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT TESTICULAR CANCER...



Background

The good news is that testicular cancer is rare and highly treatable. Most men who get it are cured. The bad news is it's the second most common cancer in young men aged between 18 and 39 years in Australia. There are around 550 cases diagnosed each year. If you had an undescended testicle (the testicle failed to move down from the scrotum after birth), your risk is significantly higher. You also have a higher risk if your father or brother suffered from testicular cancer.¹⁰

It's in your hands

Be aware of how your testicles normally feel by checking them on a regular basis:

- Check your testicles about once a month, while in the bath or shower.
- Cradle your scrotum in both hands using fingers and thumbs to examine and compare your testicles. Small differences in size are normal.
- Testicles should feel smooth with no lumps, swellings or hardening present.
- There is a soft rubbery tube at the top and back of both testicles. This is called the epididymis. It carries sperm to the penis. It can be tender and it wobbles. Lumps tend to be fixed to the testicles.

Slipping onto the crossbar of your bike doesn't increase your risk of testicular cancer – but like any injury it might extend your vocabulary.

You should see your doctor if:

- you can feel a small lump or swelling on either testicle;
- you notice any hardening of the testicle;
- you can feel a sensation of dragging or heaviness in your scrotum;
- you experience dull aches in the groin;
- you notice any smelly pus or blood in your semen.

Thankfully, most lumps aren't cancer. But don't ignore a lump. Discuss with your doctor and decide whether you need further tests. If it is cancer there are a range of options for treatment. Surgery, radiotherapy and chemotherapy may be used alone or together. All are highly effective. After treatment most men can have children and a normal sex life.

It's normal for one testicle to be lower than the other. It's nature's way of allowing you to cross your legs without screaming.

IT'S GOOD TO CHECK...

It's good to check your testicles regularly.

If you do, you will be aware of any unusual changes.

But pick your time and place carefully as it can attract the wrong sort of attention on the bus!!

Once a month in the bath or shower is just about right.

Bodywork

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT SKIN CANCER...

Sun Sense

The sun damages your bodywork by its Ultraviolet Radiation (UV). There are two types of UV radiation.

- UVA radiation causes early ageing and skin cancer.
- UVB radiation causes burning and skin cancer.

Tanning is a sign that damaged skin is trying to protect itself from the sun's ultraviolet rays.

Skin cancer

There are two types of skin cancer.

Non-melanoma is the most common form of skin cancer.

Watch out for:

- a new growth or sore that does not heal as it should;
- a spot or sore that continues to itch, hurt, crust, scab or bleed;
- constant skin ulcers that are not explained by other causes.

Malignant Melanoma is the most serious form of skin cancer. Although it is relatively rare, it is on the increase. It most often appears as a changing mole or freckle.

Watch out for:

- **Size:** bigger than the butt end of a pencil (more than 6mm diameter);
- **Colour variety:** shades of tan, brown, black and sometimes red, blue or white;
- **Shape:** ragged or scalloped edge and one half unlike the other;
- **Itchiness;**
- **Bleeding.**

Follow the SunSmart Code

- **Seek shade.**
- **Slip on clothing that covers arms, legs and torso, made from closely woven fabric.**
- **Slop on sunscreen SPF 30+ every 2 hours and after swimming.**
- **Slap on a hat (that covers ears, neck and nose!)**
- **Wrap on sun glasses to protect your eyes.¹¹**
- **Avoid being in the sun between 10am-3pm – that's when ultraviolet is at its strongest.¹²**

Look at your moles and watch out for changes in them. Many skin changes will be harmless. But if you notice anything unusual, you should visit your doctor. The good news is; early diagnosis is likely to lead to recovery.

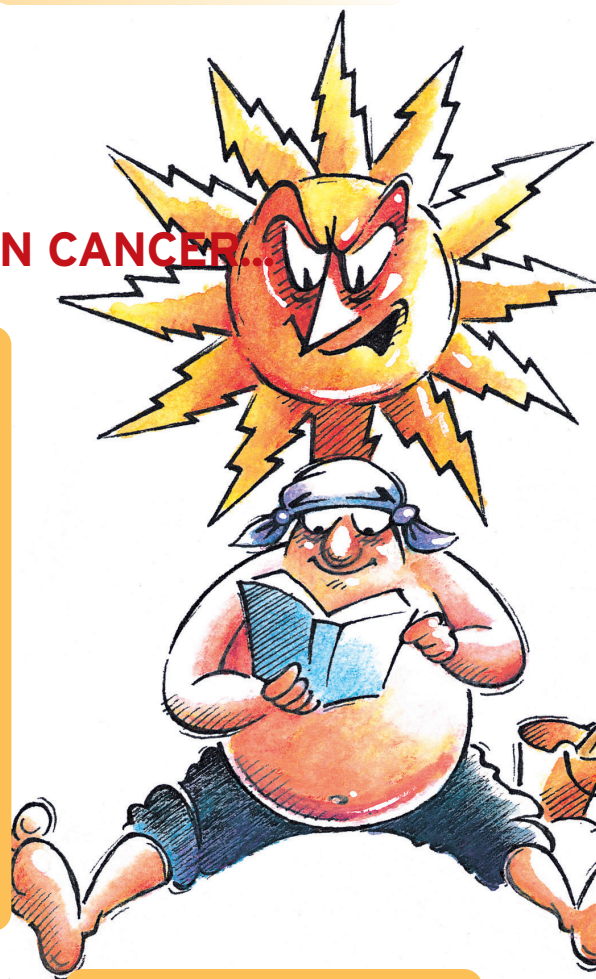
Sunscreens and smokescreens

People get confused over sunscreens and can damage their skin by choosing the wrong sunscreen for them or not using enough.

Read your sunscreen label and make sure it has an SPF rating and is Broad Spectrum.

The SPF or Sun Protection Factor tells you how much protection you are getting from UVB rays. The words 'Broad Spectrum' indicate that a sunscreen protects against UVA and UVB rays. **Try to buy a Broad Spectrum sunscreen that is SPF 30+.**¹³

Remember! Wearing sunscreen does not mean that you can stay out in the sun longer than recommended. Sunscreen offers some protection but use it with cover-up clothing.



NOT A LOT OF PEOPLE KNOW THIS

Skin cancer is the most common cancer in Australia.

Your lifetime risk of developing skin cancer is one in two.¹⁴

Even cloudy days can deliver dangerous levels of UV rays.

Some shirts are so thin they let almost all the sun shine through.

Virtually all risk comes from the sun or artificial UV sources (i.e. solariums).

YOUR TOP MECHANIC

GETTING THE BEST FROM YOUR GP VISIT

- *Find a GP who suits you:* The division of GPs keeps a list of GPs in the area. The Yellow Pages should also have a list. But asking your mates can be the best way to find your kind of doctor.
- *Write down your symptoms before you see your doctor:* It's easy to forget the most important things during a visit to the doctor. Doctors home-in on important clues. When did it start? How did it feel? Did anyone else suffer as well? Did this ever happen before? What have you done about it so far? Are you on any medication at present? If you make a list before you go you'll have all the answers for your doctor.
- *Be realistic:* If you come in to your doctor armed with a list of complaints as long as your arm, don't expect to get everything sorted in one visit. With an average of 10 minutes per visit you may be invited back to get through all your concerns.
- *Arrive informed:* Check out the Web for information before you go to the surgery. There are thousands of sites on health, men's health and cancer. Remember that some information on the web is not accurate, so visit websites with a good reputation or an HON sign, which means they follow rules for presenting health information online. There is a list of websites at the back of this booklet. The Cancer Council also has a helpline (ph: 13 11 20) where you can get information, confidential advice or support from health professionals. The service is also available by email at helpline@cancertas.org.au
- *Ask questions:* If your mechanic stuck his head into the bonnet of your car, you would most certainly want to know what he planned to do. Your doctor is about to lift the bonnet on your body – don't be afraid to ask why and what he plans to do.
- *Don't beat about the bush:* If you have a lump on your testicles say so! With a short consultation time there is a real danger of coming out with a prescription for a sore nose.
- *Listen to what they say:* If you don't understand, say so. It helps if they write down the important points. Most people pick up less than half of what their doctor has told them.
- *If you want a second opinion say so:* Ask for a specialist appointment if you want a second opinion. But remember, your GP is a person with feelings and not a computer. Compliment your doctor for helping you. Then explain why you want a second opinion.

It's easy to forget the most important things during a visit to the doctor. If you make a list *before* you go, you'll have all the answers for your doctor.



Trust your doctor:
But remember, there is a difference between trust and blind faith. Your health is a partnership between you and your doctor -but it's your body.

■ Your local pharmacist can also be a great source of information. They can help with your healthcare questions and advice on medications. So get the best from your pharmacist too – they'd be happy to help.

■ Don't be afraid to ask to see your notes: Some doctors now show their patients what they are writing. Unfortunately, doctor's language can be difficult to understand. Latin and Greek are still in use although less so now. They also use abbreviations in your notes. So ask for explanations. e.g. TATT – Tired all the time, DNA – Did not attend, FU2 – you insulted him!



USER MANUAL UPDATES

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

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¹¹ Cancer Council Australia. 'Cancer Smart Lifestyle: SunSmart'(2007). www.cancer.org.au/cancersmartlifestyle/SunSmart.htm

¹² Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing 'National Skin Cancer Awareness Campaign (2008) www.skincancer.gov.au/internet/skincancer/publishing.nsf/Content/how-1

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Glossary of Common Terms

Chemotherapy: the use of drugs that kill cancer cells.

Erectile dysfunction: a condition where the penis can't become upright for sexual intercourse.

Polyps or adenomatous polyposis: growths, usually non-cancerous, that occur in the lining of the bowel.

Radiotherapy: the use of X-rays to destroy cancer cells.

Digital Rectal Examination (DRE): insertion of a glove-covered finger to check the lower end of the bowel or feel for the prostate.

Saturated fat: this fat comes mainly from animal fat. Unsaturated fat is a healthier option.

Scrotum: the pouch that contains the testicles.

Unsaturated fat: this fat comes mainly from vegetable fat and is better for one's health.

ORGANISATIONS / AGENCIES

The Cancer Council Australia

Helpline: call 13 11 20

Website: www.cancer.org.au

Andrology Australia

Email: info@andrologyaustralia.org

Tel: + 61 1300 303 878

Website: www.andrologyaustralia.org

Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia

Freecall: 1800 220 099

E-mail: enquiries@prostate.org.au

Website: www.prostate.org.au

Mensline

Helpline: call 1300 78 9978

Email: talkitover@menslineaus.org.au

Website: www.menslineaus.org.au

National Bowel Cancer Screening Program

Free call: 1800 118 868

Email: bowelscreen@medicareaustralia.gov.au

Website: www.cancerscreening.gov.au

For specific information regarding completing the FOBT kit you can call the FOBT Helpline on 1300 738 365.

Heart Foundation

Information line: 1300 362 787

Website: www.heartfoundation.org.au



Cancer Screening and Control Services

Department of Health and Human Services

Level 4, 25 Argyle St, Hobart

Ph: (03) 6216 4300

www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/cancerscreening

This manual has been adapted with kind permission from the Irish Cancer Society