

EMS Safety Bulletin: Cancer Prevention

Kidney, pancreatic, prostate, thyroid, breast, skin, ovarian, brain, cervical cancer...the list goes on. EMS providers must remember to protect themselves so that they can continue to protect the public. The following are ways that EMS providers can decrease cancer risks.

Medical Surveillance

Medical exams and preventative screening are recommended, whether through your department or your personal physician. Recommended tests include:

Annual Exam

- Blood pressure, pulse
- Respiratory rate, temperature
- Oxygen saturation
- Weight and body fat index
- Thorough skin exam
- Eye exam and hearing testing
- Oral exam
- Heart and lung exam
- Abdominal and testicular exam
- Prostate and rectal exam
- Fecal occult blood testing
- Pelvic and Pap for females
- Vascular and neurological exams
- Mental status exam
- Musculoskeletal exam

Annual Labs and Screening Tests

- Comprehensive metabolic and chemistry panel
- Liver function tests
- Hepatitis profile
- Complete blood count
- Thyroid panel
- Hemoglobin A1c (for diabetes monitoring)
- Fasting lipid profile and blood glucose
- Urinalysis and urine biomarkers
- EKG
- PSA (begin at age 40 for prostate cancer screening)
- Pulmonary function test every 3 years
- Chest X-ray every 3 years
- Colonoscopy (begin age 40 and every 5 years)
- Exercise stress test (begin age 40 and every 3 years)
- Mammograms for females (begin age 35)

Nutritional Counseling

- Drink at least eight glasses of water a day
- Adding more vegetables, fruits, whole grains to your diet and reducing saturated fats
- Limit meat intake to one serving per week; substitute with more baked or grilled fish
- Increase intake of calcium, vitamin D, fish oil, fiber, and folate supplements
- Practice portion control

Lifestyle Modification

Some small changes that can have a significant impact to decreasing your cancer risk include:

- Stop using tobacco products
- Use sunscreen regularly
- Limit alcohol intake
- Perform monthly breast or testicular exams

