CancerFactFinder Website Launched to Give Reliable Info on the Causes of Cancer

Does red meat cause cancer? Does stress or Radon? CancerFactFinder.org offers evidence-based answers to such questions.

April 23, 2022 By Dana-Farber Cancer Institute

A team led by the Zhu Family Center for Global Cancer Prevention at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health and the Center for Cancer Equity and Engagement at the Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center has launched Cancer FactFinder (https://cancerfactfinder.org/), a new website that provides accurate and reliable information about what does and does not cause cancer. For each topic on the website, the team, which includes scientific experts and community members, reviewed and summarized the best scientific, evidence-based information available. The team will continuously update the website with new topics and additional information to existing topics.

For each of the more than 60 topics on the website, such as “Red Meat,” “Stress,” “Hormone Replacement Therapy,” or “Radon,” the summary provides information about:

- What you may have heard
- What science tells us
- How to reduce your risk
- What this means to me
- Sources and links for more information

Each claim about a topic, such as “Red meat causes cancer,” also comes with an interpretation of the team’s findings about a claim’s veracity:

- Most likely or definitely true: There is sufficient evidence to suggest that the claim is true.

- False—misinformation: There is sufficient evidence to suggest that the claim is false.

- We're not sure yet—scientists are still working on it: There is not sufficient evidence to say whether the claim is or isn't true.

"There is a lot of misinformation and confusion in social media and through word of mouth about what causes cancer. Being able to access accurate information about cancer causes can help people make health and lifestyle choices that minimize their future cancer risk," said Timothy Rebbeck, PhD professor of medical oncology and a member of the Population Sciences Department at Dana-Farber and the director of the Zhu Family Center at Harvard Chan School.

In addition to Harvard Chan School and the Dana-Farber/Harvard Cancer Center, the Cancer FactFinder team includes community advocates and experts from BayState Health, Boston Cancer Support, Boston University, Men of Color Health Awareness, Silent Spring Institute, and Yale University.

This article was originally published on April 7, 2022, by Dana-Farber Cancer Institute. It is republished with permission.

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