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# CANCER FACTS

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National Cancer Institute • National Institutes of Health  
Department of Health and Human Services

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## Guide to National Cancer Institute Information Resources for Patients and the Public

### Key Points

- The National Cancer Institute's (NCI) Cancer.gov Web site provides access to cancer information, clinical trial results, and prepared literature searches on specific cancer topics (see the Cancer.gov Web site section).
- NCI's PDQ database contains cancer information summaries and abstracts of ongoing cancer clinical trials (see the PDQ section).
- NCI's Cancer Information Service staff provide the latest cancer information (see the Cancer Information Service section).

### Cancer.gov Web site

The cancer information section of the National Cancer Institute's (NCI) Cancer.gov Web site provides access to PDQ®, the Institute's comprehensive cancer information database. Additional resources available on this Web site include publications for cancer patients, clinical trial results, a dictionary of cancer terms, and prepared literature searches on specific cancer topics. Links to other Web sites that have been reviewed for quality and reliability can also be found on Cancer.gov. These resources are available at <http://cancer.gov/cancerinformation> on the Internet.



## PDQ

PDQ, which was developed and is maintained by the NCI's Cancer Information Products and Systems (CIPS) program, contains cancer information summaries describing the latest advances in cancer treatment, supportive care, screening, prevention, genetics, and complementary and alternative medicine (CAM). Most cancer information summaries appear in two versions: a technical version for health professionals and a nontechnical version for patients, their families, and the public. Many summaries are also available in Spanish.

The information in PDQ is peer reviewed by editorial boards of oncology experts regularly. The database is updated to ensure that the information it provides is consistent with the results of the latest cancer research. PDQ also contains an extensive directory of approximately 1,800 ongoing clinical trials, including information about studies around the world.

The public can access cancer information from PDQ in several ways, either on their own or with assistance from NCI. The database is available online and via CD-ROM through various commercial and nonprofit information distributors. A list of NCI's current distributors can be obtained by contacting the Licensing Coordinator at:

Licensing  
CIPS  
National Cancer Institute  
Suite 3002B, 6116 Executive Boulevard  
Bethesda, MD 20892  
Fax: 301-480-8105  
E-mail: [license@cips.nci.nih.gov](mailto:license@cips.nci.nih.gov)

Many of the distributors are also listed on the Cancer.gov Licensees Web page at <http://cancer.gov/licensing/licensees> on the Internet.

## **Cancer Information Service**

The NCI's Cancer Information Service (CIS) is a national information and education network for patients, the public, and health professionals. From 14 regional offices covering the entire United States, including Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the Pacific Islands, trained staff provide the latest cancer information and smoking cessation counseling through a toll-free telephone service. Staff can respond to calls in either English or Spanish.

The CIS's toll-free number is 1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237). For deaf and hard of hearing callers with TTY equipment, the number is 1-800-332-8615. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., local time. Callers also have the option of listening to recorded information about cancer 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The CIS also provides live, online assistance through the *LiveHelp* link on the NCI's Web site. Through *LiveHelp*, an instant messaging service, information specialists provide Internet users with help in navigating NCI Web sites, searching for clinical trials, and finding answers to questions about cancer. *LiveHelp* is available Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Eastern time.

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## **Sources of National Cancer Institute Information**

### **Cancer Information Service**

Toll-free: 1-800-4-CANCER (1-800-422-6237)

TTY (for deaf and hard of hearing callers): 1-800-332-8615

### **NCI Online**

#### ***Internet***

Use <http://cancer.gov> to reach the NCI's Web site.

***LiveHelp***

Cancer Information Specialists offer online assistance through the *LiveHelp* link on the NCI's Web site.

**This fact sheet was reviewed on 4/25/03**