



Cancer Control Month, 1990

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

In recent years, our Nation has made unprecedented progress in the fight against cancer. Nevertheless, we cannot rest in our efforts to prevent this disease and to find a cure for it. Our success in the fight against cancer will depend, in large part, upon continued cooperation among researchers, health care professionals, government officials, private organizations, and the public. By disseminating the knowledge and information that physicians and scientists have gained in recent years, we can help more and more Americans to protect themselves from the threat of cancer.

Through research, we have learned that many opportunities exist for the prevention, early detection, and successful treatment of cancer. Increasing public awareness of these opportunities is the aim of Cancer Control Month—and it is especially important to those segments of our population that suffer from a high incidence of cancer.

Statistics from the National Cancer Institute indicate that minority men and women, the poor, and those over 65 years of age have disproportionately high rates of cancer. In an effort to address this problem, the National Cancer Institute and the American Cancer Society have intensified their efforts to reach these groups. Special programs—such as the Institute's National Black Leadership Initiative on Cancer and the American Cancer Society's Cancer and the Poor Initiative—have been designed to ensure that all Americans learn what they can do to protect their health.

All Americans can reduce their risk of developing cancer through simple behavioral and dietary changes. For example, smoking has been linked with many types of cancer, yet 50 million people in this country continue to smoke. Those who smoke or use smokeless tobacco should be encouraged to quit, and, because it is difficult to stop tobacco use, young people should be encouraged never to start.

Studies have also indicated that a diet high in fiber and low in fats and cholesterol can help to prevent several forms of cancer. Thus, many supermarket owners and fast food vendors have begun to join in efforts to convey valuable nutritional information to the public. In fact, this month, with the cooperation of the National Restaurant Association, the American Culinary Federation, and the Parent-Teachers Association, the American Cancer Society is launching the "Great American Food Fight Against Cancer." This campaign is designed to promote healthy food choices by consumers throughout the country.

Just as preventative measures can help reduce the risk of many forms of cancer, early detection can help to save lives. Physicians are now able to detect many types of cancer at a very early stage, when the chance for cure is greatest. If they are to take advantage of this progress, all Americans must be encouraged to seek regular checkups and cancer screenings, such as mammograms and Pap smears for women. I also urge all Americans to learn through their physicians or other health care professionals how to conduct regular self-examinations. It has been estimated that the death rate from breast cancer could be reduced by 30 percent if American women followed early detection guidelines.

This month, as we recognize promising efforts in cancer prevention and salute those dedicated individuals who are working to educate the public about this disease, we also acknowledge the importance of continued research. We express our gratitude, in particular, to those dedicated physicians and scientists and courageous patients who are engaged in clinical trials of new cancer drugs and treatment techniques. These Americans are helping to win the fight against cancer for all of us.

In 1938, the Congress of the United States passed a joint resolution (52 Stat. 148, 36 U.S.C. 150) requesting the President to issue an annual proclamation declaring April to be Cancer Control Month.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GEORGE BUSH, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim the month of April 1990 as Cancer Control Month. I invite the Governors of the fifty States and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and the appropriate officials of all other areas under the American flag, to issue similar proclamations. I also ask health care professionals, insurance companies, the communications and food industries, community groups, and individual citizens to unite during the month to reaffirm publicly our Nation's continuing commitment to controlling cancer.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this tenth day of April, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and fourteenth.

George Bush