



# Men 3 times more likely to get **cancer**

By Clodagh Sheehy

IRISH men are up to three times more likely than women to get **cancer** and die from it.

Unhealthy lifestyles – with smoking, alcohol, bad diet, obesity and lack of exercise – are the greatest contributors to men's **cancers** and their low survival rates.

A landmark study, the first in this country to look at **cancer** from a gender perspective, has revealed that not only are men three times more likely to get **cancer**, they are also three times more likely than women to die from it.

Men get more bowel, lung, bladder and stomach **cancer** and while fewer men get melanoma skin **cancer**, the ones who do are more likely than women to die from it.

Late diagnosis also contributes to the lower survival rates for men's **cancers**.

The study commissioned by the Irish **Cancer** Society, was carried out at the Centre for Men's Health in the Institute of Technology in Carlow and the National **Cancer** Registry of Ireland.

Its launch coincides with Men's Health Week 2013.

It found that men's **cancers** were between 1.6 and three times more common than women's and the death rate was also 1.6 to 2.7 times higher for men.

Men are more likely to die from bowel **cancer**, particularly a year after diagnosis and their survival rate for lung **cancer** is also significantly lower than women.

Lower socio-economic status was also associated with a higher risk of developing a number of **cancers**.

Lifestyle is one of the main reasons for the higher **cancer** rate among men says Dr Noel Richardson, director of the Centre for Men's Health in Carlow.

"The publication of today's report gives a solid evidence base for what action needs to be taken by both policy makers and service provider," he adds.

Operation Transformation participant Killian Byrne, who took part in the report launch, stresses the importance of encouraging men to take steps to improve their health based on his own experience.

"Many younger men may take good health for granted. They may not notice that they have become less active or put on weight until their health becomes a

concern.

## DETECTION

"Looking after your health is not a sign of weakness but a sign that you are in control."

The Irish **Cancer** Society says the message is the same for older and younger men alike and it is to know the value of good health.

"Get informed about risk factors of **cancer**, and what you can do to protect your health. Know your body; look out for any unusual changes and to take action. Early detection and treatment can greatly increase your chances of beating **cancer**."

Head of services at the society, Donal Buggy, said it was already looking at ways of developing new programmes to make people more aware of how they can reduce their **cancer** risk.

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