

Cancer Survivors: A Growing Trend

More reasons for hope than ever before!

Life after cancer is a growing reality for a number of Americans who are now described as cancer survivors, rather than cancer victims.

Cancer Survivors on the Rise

People are now surviving long after they have been diagnosed with cancer.

Advances in early detection, better and more targeted drugs, and improved technologies are making remission a reality for millions.

And statistics show that those diagnosed with cancer have reasons now, more than ever before, to be hopeful. Some of the most impressive statistics reported from the National Cancer Institute include the following:

- *More survivors.* In 1971, an estimated 3 million Americans, or 1.5 percent of the total population, were living with a type of cancer. Currently, the number of cancer survivors has tripled.
- *Longer survival.* Fourteen percent of cancer survivors have beaten their disease for more than 20 years.
- *Better treatment of childhood cancers.* Almost 75 percent of children diagnosed with

cancer before age 15 can now expect to live for at least 10 years post-diagnosis.

- *Better prognosis for older patients.* The largest annual gains in survival were seen among patients aged 50 to 85. In 1975, 43 percent of patients in this age range could expect to live for five years post-diagnosis; by 1997, that number climbed to 64 percent—the best year-to-year improvement from any age group.

The Future Looks Bright

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the official government goal for the year 2020 is to be up to a 70 percent five-year survivorship.

The outlook for such a positive future comes from a combination of early detection and better treatment, especially for cancers of the breast, prostate, colon, and rectum. Currently, women with breast cancer account for the

largest percent of survivors, followed by men with prostate cancer, and then colon cancer patients, making advancements in these cancers a much needed area of study.

More Information

To learn more about cancer and cancer survival, visit the sites listed below.

National Cancer Institute
www.survivorship.cancer.gov

American Cancer Society
www.cancer.org

Cancer Care
www.cancercares.org



Did you know...

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the number of cancer survivors in this country has increased steadily over the past three years for all cancers combined...that number is expected to increase because of improvements in cancer detection, treatment, and care.