

[Having cancer can lead to a longer life!](#)

In 1992 His Honour the late Henry Callow CBE, then second Deemster, was the last judge in the British Isles to hand down the death sentence to a convicted murderer (later committed to life imprisonment). Many may feel that they face a similar fate at the time of receiving a cancer diagnosis. Half a century ago this was a common outcome but better treatments are leading to ever improving results - more than half of cancer patients now survive a decade or longer.



A recent study has gone even further and shown something that seems quite astonishing – a group of individuals diagnosed and treated for cancer living longer than a matched cohort of individuals without the disease. The result applied to men with early (stage 1) prostate cancer and is probably attributable to either the individuals having more overall health awareness or better monitoring of their well-being within the Healthcare system after their treatment (other tumour groups with stage 1 disease had identical outcomes to their cohorts). The study demonstrates the importance of taking responsibility for your own overall well-being as well as good care from Health professionals.



Being aware that you might be developing cancer can be difficult. Catching a cold, or having the flu', is usually very obvious to the unfortunate patient, as well as surrounding family, friends and colleagues, with symptoms coming on over several hours. On the other hand, tumours tend to grow slowly and produce few problems in the early stages. When symptoms do develop, they can often be mild and vague, and seldom interfere with our daily routine.

We can all experience a few days when we are 'off colour' for no obvious reason – probably caught a mild bug or eaten something that did not agree with us. But if things do not seem or feel right over a number of weeks then that suggests that something is still going on. We might also find something new or unusual for us – a lump; an episode of unexpected bleeding; change in our pattern of going to the toilet; a niggly persistent cough. This is the point at which good, sound professional advice should be sought. There may be something quite simple going on and you will get better quicker with advice and treatment from your doctor. If, after investigations, it turns out that a tumour is present, early presentation will make the chances of having early readily treatable disease more likely.

We are still some way from a cure for all affected by cancer but steadily heading in that direction. Until that day arrives helping yourself, through greater awareness and vigilance, can contribute to you being around longer than others.



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Celebrating 60 years (1959 – 2019) of raising funds to support research into cancer, raise awareness of cancer and assist those affected by cancer