

## Think About the Link: Campaign Overview

### The Campaign

Think About the Link<sup>®</sup> is a prevention and education campaign developed by the Prevent Cancer Foundation<sup>®</sup> to increase public awareness of the connection between certain viruses and cancers. Millions of Americans harbor viruses that cause cancer and hundreds of thousands worldwide suffer from the cancers they cause. Because many people are unaware a link exists between certain viruses and cancers, they do not take steps that can protect themselves against these viruses, and ultimately, prevent cancer.

The campaign focuses on three viruses linked to cancer: human papillomavirus (HPV), hepatitis B and hepatitis C. Think About the Link<sup>®</sup> aims to increase screening rates for the viruses, increase immunization rates for HPV and hepatitis B, and increase awareness of and access to treatment options for hepatitis C.

### Our Efforts

Think About the Link<sup>®</sup> works to achieve its goals by:

- Developing and sharing educational materials for health care professionals, patients, parents, and law makers on the viruses and their links to different cancers
- Initiating and engaging in conversations with the public (especially health care professionals and parents) on social media
- Educating the media on the link between viruses and cancer; and
- Holding outreach events in cities across the country to educate at-risk individuals within their local communities

### The Importance

Few people understand the link between viruses and cancers and how to reduce their risk of developing cancer. Vaccinations for HPV and hepatitis B and screenings and treatment for hepatitis C are critical cancer prevention methods. In fact:

- More than half (53 percent) of adults are not aware HPV can lead to cancer if untreated.
- More than half (57 percent) of adults are not aware the HPV vaccine can significantly reduce the risk of certain cancers.
- Approximately 92 percent of adults believe more education is needed about the dangers of HPV.
- Sixty-seven percent of adults are not aware hepatitis B increases the risk of liver cancer.
- Seventy-five percent of adults are not aware the hepatitis B vaccine can lower the risk of liver cancer.
- Seventy-three percent of adults are not aware that hepatitis C treatment can reduce the risk of liver cancer.
- Only seven percent of adults indicated their physician has recommended one or more vaccines specifically to reduce cancer risk.

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### Your Role

There are ways you can prevent cancers caused by viruses:

- **Get vaccinated.** Make sure you and your family receive the recommended HPV and hepatitis B vaccines.
- **Get tested.** If you are a woman, talk to your health care professional about getting a Pap test to screen for cervical cancer. If you are at high risk for hepatitis B or C infection, get screened for the viruses.
- **Get treated.** If you are infected with hepatitis B or C, there are treatment options available to lower your risk of getting liver cancer.
- **Protect yourself.** Avoid engaging in behaviors that transmit HPV and/or lead to hepatitis B and C, such as having unprotected sex, using injectable recreational drugs or sharing needles.
- **Get Educated.** Visit the Viruses and Cancer pages, connect with us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter to learn more about the link between viruses and cancer.
- **Advocate.** Using the Cervical Cancer Action Toolkit and HPV Legislative Report Card, engage your law makers and support initiatives that increase public awareness, education and access to the HPV vaccine.
- **Share your story.** Help others understand the link and ways to prevent virally induced cancers by sharing your story.

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### References:

Statistics sourced from a survey conducted by the Prevent Cancer Foundation<sup>®</sup> in partnership with Russell Research Firm.