Men's Health and Wellbeing

NeuroEndocrine Cancer Australia
Champions for early diagnosis and a cure

November 19 marks International Men's Day – an opportunity to recognise men's health and wellbeing, celebrate the positive contributions men make to their families and communities, and raise awareness of the challenges many men and boys continue to face.

Held annually on November 19, International Men's Day celebrates men and boys in all their diversity, while providing an important platform to address key social, physical and mental health issues affecting them.

In Australia, some of the issues affecting men and boys include:

- More men than women are diagnosed with cancer each year.
- Three out of four suicides are men.
- On average, men pass away six years younger than women.
- Boys underperform girls at various stages of education.
- Fathers who want to be more involved in their children's lives can face a range of social and practical barriers



Despite the evidence highlighting the challenges faced by Australian men and boys, rigid gender stereotypes and outdated perceptions of masculinity continue to influence how some men approach their health and wellbeing.

These attitudes can discourage open conversations, prevent men from seeking help and contribute to delays in accessing appropriate care and support.

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These issues are particularly relevant when considering men living with neuroendocrine cancer.

For some men, reluctance to discuss symptoms associated with neuroendocrine cancer, disclose concerns about pain or seek medical attention can add another barrier to timely diagnosis and care.

A cancer diagnosis can also challenge a man's sense of identity, independence and control. Some men may feel increased pressure to remain strong, protect their families from worry or manage their diagnosis privately. Others may find it difficult to express emotions such as fear, uncertainty, vulnerability or the emotional impact of living with a cancer that is often poorly understood.



Feelings of shame, guilt, embarrassment and anxiety can influence whether men seek help, ask questions or access the support they need.
When these feelings are compounded by traditional expectations of masculinity, men may be less likely to acknowledge when they are struggling.

It is important that we recognise these barriers and create environments where men feel comfortable speaking openly about their symptoms, concerns and experiences.

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How can we better support men and boys?

Improving men's health is not simply about encouraging men to seek help. It is also about creating supportive environments where asking for help is accepted, respected and encouraged.

Start conversations:

Check in with male friends, family members, colleagues and patients. Ask how they are really going and make time to listen.

Listen without judgement:

Allow men to express their concerns and emotions without feeling that they need to appear strong or have all the answers.

Normalise help-seeking

Encourage men to speak with healthcare professionals about symptoms, changes in their health or concerns about their wellbeing.

Encourage involvement in care:

Ensure men living with neuroendocrine cancer are supported to ask questions, participate in treatment decisions and access appropriate information and support.

Recognise the whole person:

Cancer care must extend beyond the physical diagnosis. Emotional, psychological, social and practical needs are also important.

Follow up:

Regular check-ins and ongoing support can help men feel valued, heard and less isolated throughout their neuroendocrine cancer experience.



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A message for International Men's Day

International Men's Day reminds us that men's health deserves attention, understanding and action.

For men living with neuroendocrine cancer, being heard, understood and supported can make a significant difference. Sometimes, a genuine conversation is the first step. Sometimes, taking the time to listen, following up or offering practical support can have a far greater impact than we realise.

These simple gestures may help men feel heard, valued and supported, particularly when navigating the challenges of a neuroendocrine cancer diagnosis.

