



American
Institute for
Cancer
Research®

IMPACT REPORT 2026

Your Impact in Action

Cancer affects all of us. At AICR, we want you to know how much we value your generosity and commitment to cancer prevention.

In these pages, you will hear about the impact your support has had on new research occurring in laboratories all over the country and the world - because you believe that cancer can be prevented and we can take meaningful steps to reduce our risk. Meet some of the researchers whose work you made possible through AICR grant funding and discover the breakthroughs and outcomes they have achieved. Learn how your support helps early career researchers pursue promising discoveries and investigate timely questions that might otherwise go unexplored.

Thank you for believing in this mission and for being an essential partner in this important work.



The Unique Impact of AICR

We're sometimes asked the question: *How is AICR different from other cancer charities?*

Cancer is complicated and comprised of many different diseases that can affect various parts of the body. It begins when abnormal cells grow and spread uncontrollably.

Many cancer charities focus on specific cancer types, such as breast cancer or lymphoma, pediatric cancers, or cancer treatment and patient care. At AICR, we're different. We have a unique and singular focus on **cancer prevention**. Through research and education, we strive to help people reduce the risk of developing cancer and help cancer survivors lower the risk of recurrence or second cancers.

Our **CUP Global Program**, **INSPIRE Research Challenge** and the **Marilyn Gentry Fellowship** also make AICR unique among cancer charities.



CUP Global Program

CUP Global is the flagship global research initiative led by the World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF) network, which includes AICR. The CUP Global program analyzes the findings from all existing cancer prevention and survivorship research, including the most recent research papers, to assess the strength of the evidence, reach consensus conclusions and, where possible, make recommendations.

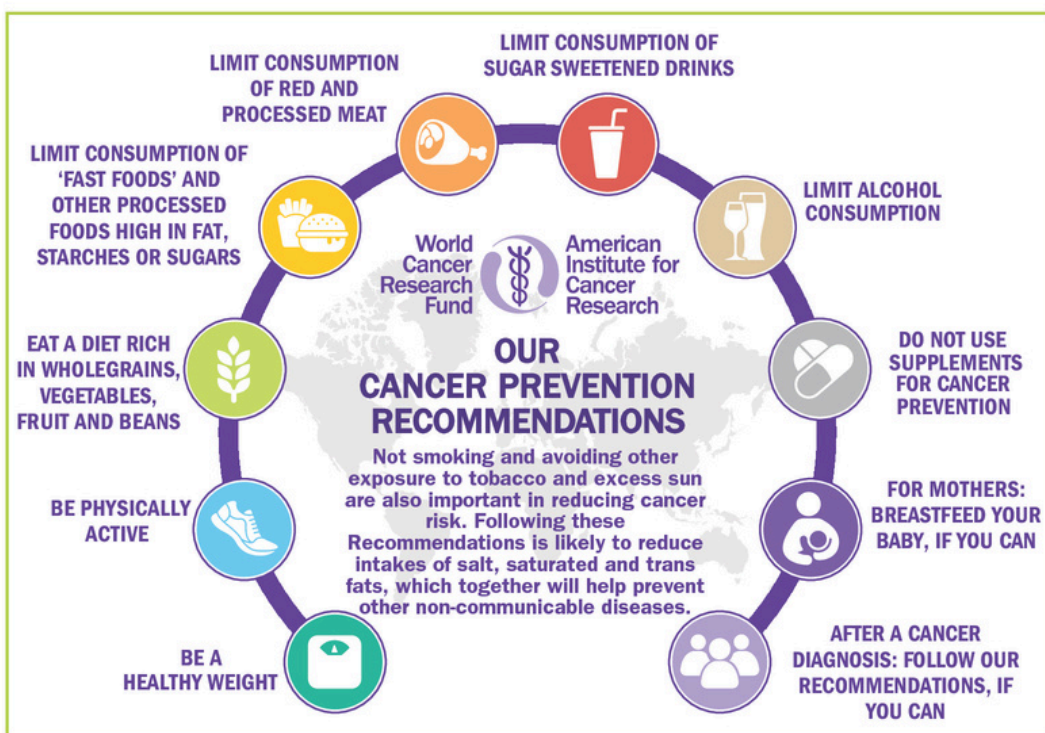
What Makes CUP Global unique?

- 1 It's continuously updated with real-time research happening throughout the world.** It is not a static report produced at a specific point in time. Rather, as new research is produced and published, it is added to the database.
- 2 It's the most comprehensive database of its kind** – no other cancer charity is doing this. It contains over 12,000 papers on cancer prevention and survival, and these have been synthesized and critiqued by over 140 scientists from 17 different countries.
- 3 The WCRF network, including AICR, utilizes the outcomes of the CUP Global Program to provide global cancer prevention guidelines which help inform the world on how to reduce the risk of cancer. It's the only authoritative scientific resource of its kind, trusted globally by oncology experts, researchers, health professionals, policy makers, and the public.**
- 4 Even though the WCRF network owns and oversees the CUP Program, it is also very collaborative. We work with a wide set of collaborators across the globe in order to strengthen the evidence-base related to novel modifiable risk factors and cancer incidence.** This includes undertaking reviews in new areas of investigation, such as how exposures in childhood and early life might impact cancer risk in adulthood.
- 5 CUP Global is a summation of decades of work and leadership in cancer prevention and survivorship** which have evolved into the CUP Global model today based on the foundation of three Expert Reports published in 1997, 2007 and 2018.

New Data Shows That Following Our Cancer Prevention Recommendations Reduces Overall Risk of Death

This is the first study worldwide to report associations between following the 2018 WCRF/AICR Cancer Prevention Recommendations and lower chance of death overall in individuals living with and beyond prostate, lung, esophageal and liver cancers.

The research was funded by Wereld Kanker Onderzoek Fonds (WKOF), the Netherlands-based charity within the World Cancer Research Fund International network of charities, which also includes the World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF) and the American Institute for Cancer Research (AICR). The research was led by Professor John Mathers, Professor Linda Sharp, and Dr. Fiona Malcomson at Newcastle University, UK. Dr. Malcomson, an expert in human nutrition, is also a scientific advisor to AICR. She says “The WCRF/AICR Cancer Prevention Recommendations include lifestyle-based advice such as ‘be physically active’ and ‘eat a diet rich in whole grains, vegetables, fruits and beans. These recommendations are used extensively for cancer prevention, and it is also advised for them to be followed by those living with and beyond cancer, if they can.”



Malcomson explains that while previous research has suggested that these recommendations have a role to play in survivorship, this study is the first of its kind, in a UK cohort, to show just how significant these lifestyle factors can be for people diagnosed with cancer.

The findings show that following a healthy lifestyle is important for cancer prevention and may also have implications for long-term health after a cancer diagnosis.

The research team suggest that these findings support prioritizing the development of interventions to enhance adherence to the WCRF/AICR Cancer Prevention Recommendations, which may potentially lower mortality risk among people diagnosed with cancer.

“The take home message is that the 2018 WCRF/AICR Cancer Prevention Recommendations apply to cancer survivors too,” says Dr. Malcomson. “Having a healthier eating pattern, being more physically active and avoiding being too heavy, as described in the Recommendations,

is associated with better long-term outcomes for those living with and beyond cancer. This means that cancer survivors can take action to improve their health and should be encouraged to do so by their healthcare providers.”

What Makes the *INSPIRE Research Challenge* and the *Marilyn Gentry Fellowship* Unique?

Presently, funding is disappearing for early career researchers, and for cancer prevention in general, and WCRF/AICR is unique in stepping into the gap. It is imperative that we do not lose the brightest minds in cancer prevention because funding is not available to them. If we don't make an investment in early researchers who have the potential to transform this field, we will lose opportunities for innovation and discovery. WCRF/AICR is addressing these important needs through two avenues.

The *INSPIRE Research Challenge* is aimed at Early Career Researchers and prioritizes innovative, bold and creative research with the potential to catalyze rapid and impactful advances in cancer prevention, treatment and survivorship. This Challenge is run in parallel with our regular grant programs.

INSPIRE research has a clear line of sight to making a difference in people's lives. The outcome of the research contributes toward helping to reduce people's risk of developing cancer or improve outcomes in cancer survivors.

Meet two INSPIRE Research Challenge scientists and their bold approaches to cancer prevention.

Reducing Colorectal Cancer Risk with Cricket Powder and Chitin: Analysis of Epigenetic and Inflammatory Biomarkers from a Randomized Controlled Trial

Dr. Rodriguez-Garcia, University of Almeria, Spain



Dietary fiber is almost exclusively provided by plant foods. However, chitin is an alternative form of fiber found in the outer shells of insects. Previous studies have shown that eating chitin can promote the growth of helpful gut bacteria and reduce inflammation. Harmful gut bacteria and inflammation have been linked to increased colorectal cancer risk. Dr. Rodriguez-Garcia's group will assess if eating chitin decreases early indicators of colorectal cancer risk. They will analyze

samples from a recent clinical trial in which participants consumed either a chitin source or a placebo. Participant samples will be assessed for changes in DNA, markers of inflammation and metabolism, and gut bacteria. These results will help provide evidence to support the potential for chitin as a source of dietary fiber for colorectal cancer prevention. Chitin is also considered a sustainable fiber source, which can contribute to improved planetary and public health.

Harnessing $\gamma\delta$ T-cell Therapies with Exercise to Treat Multiple Myeloma

Dr. Forrest Baker, University of South Carolina



Physical activity has long been recognised as beneficial for overall health and it may also play a role in improving cancer treatment outcomes. Recent research has begun exploring how exercise can boost the body's immune response to fight cancer cells more effectively. Multiple myeloma (MM) is a complex and aggressive blood cancer that affects almost 200,000 people worldwide. Despite advances in treatment, it remains a challenging disease to treat, especially when patients become resistant to existing therapies. This research proposal aims to harness the power of exercise to enhance the function of $\gamma\delta$ T-cells, a rare type of immune cell that can target and kill tumor cells including multiple myeloma cells. This concept is based on previous findings that show a single bout of exercise can mobilize and enhance the function of gamma-delta ($\gamma\delta$) T-cells in the body. These exercise-mobilized $\gamma\delta$ T-cells can be collected and manufactured outside the body, after which they exhibit increased ability to recognize and destroy cancer cells. Ultimately, by understanding how exercise can enhance $\gamma\delta$ T-cells' ability to target and destroy cancer cells, this research aims to pave the way for novel, more effective treatments for MM patients. The goal is to translate these findings into clinical applications that can improve outcomes and quality of life for individuals battling this challenging form of cancer.

AICR/WCRF Marilyn Gentry Fellowship

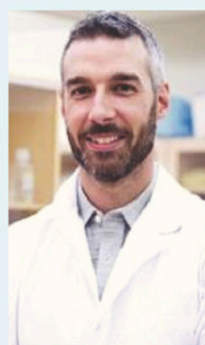
The *Marilyn Gentry Fellowship* is a research program which supports emerging leaders in the field of diet, nutrition and cancer. Dr. Kristin Altwegg, recipient of the 2025 AICR/WCRF Marilyn Gentry Fellowship, is researching whether GLP-1 weight loss drugs influence obesity-related cancer risk. The research will examine if GLP-1s can influence early cancer pathways linked to obesity, particularly in breast, endometrial and colorectal cancers. Dr. Altwegg is conducting her research in Dr. Steve Hursting's laboratory at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, giving her the opportunity to benefit from decades of expertise in the obesity and cancer field.

"As an early-career investigator, I recognize how rare yet essential the *Marilyn Gentry Fellowship* is for providing a mentored funded three-year transition from postdoctoral researcher into a junior faculty role and ultimately achieving research independence," says Dr. Altwegg. "I will leverage this Fellowship, the AICR Recommendations for Cancer Prevention, and Dr. Hursting's invaluable expertise to establish myself as a dedicated, highly collaborative, innovative investigator at the cutting edge of nutrition, metabolism, cancer research and cancer prevention."



Dr. Kristin Altwegg

Research Breakthroughs Driven by Your Generosity



Michael De Lisio, PhD, University of Ottawa

Aberrant myelopoiesis as a novel mechanism for the differential effects of obesity and exercise on colorectal cancer risk

Obesity is associated with the migration of inflammatory cells from the bone marrow to the colon, before the onset of cancer. Exercise helped prevent inflammation and cell proliferation, reducing the development of obesity-driven colon tumors.

"Obesity is linked to inflammation in the colon. This laboratory study showed that physical activity reduced that inflammation and protected against colorectal cancer" Michael De Lisio, PhD



Jeanine Genkinger, PhD, MHS, Columbia University in the City of New York

Weight Loss, Gain, and Cycling, Dietary and Lifestyle Patterns and Risk of Pancreatic Cancer

Greater adherence to the AICR/WCRF cancer prevention recommendations was associated with decreased risk of pancreatic cancer. Weight cycling (loss and regain of weight) was not associated with risk of pancreatic cancer, but further research is required.

"Following the AICR/WCRF cancer recommendations linked to reduced risk of pancreatic cancer. The impact of weight cycling on risk is still uncertain" Jeanine Genkinger, PhD, MHS



Edward Giovannucci, MD, ScD, Harvard T. H. Chan School of Public Health

Association between lifestyle factors and tumor angiogenesis in prostate cancer

Blood supply within tumors is essential for their growth. Higher rates of weight gain over time were associated with markers of increased blood vessels in prostate tumors.

"Weight gain may help prostate tumors grow by increasing their blood supply." Edward Giovannucci, PhD

Your generosity is helping save lives. Thank you for supporting AICR's work to prevent cancer and improve survivorship. With your continued partnership, we can accelerate discoveries and bring us closer to a world without cancer.