



April 2022



Dear friends of the Agency,

To mark **Rare Disease Day** on 28 February, IARC highlighted the burden of rare cancers, which are cancer types with fewer than 6 newly diagnosed cases per 100 000 people per year. The **Rare Cancers Genomics Team**, formed by IARC scientists, aims to develop innovative research projects to improve the prognosis of patients diagnosed with these rare diseases.

During the Fifty-Eighth Session of the IARC Scientific Council in February, the objective of the new **IARC COVID-19 and Cancer (IARC-C19) Initiative** was presented: a "build back better" proposal that aims to provide a global platform to monitor national policies in the wake of the pandemic and their impact on cancer services and outcomes, and provide the evidence needed to support decision-making in cancer control. The IARC-C19 Initiative is in line with IARC's mission: supporting a coordinated approach among networks of cancer experts and institutions worldwide, in close cooperation with the World Health Organization (WHO).

On 3-4 February 2022, IARC participated in the European Cancer Meeting of the French National Cancer Institute, **Les Rencontres européennes de l'Institut national du cancer (INCa)**, held in the context of the French Presidency of the Council of the European Union. This meeting sought to increase cooperation and enhance synergies to help Europe advance in the fight against cancer, for the benefit of the citizens of the 27 Member States.

To mark **Cervical Cancer Awareness Month** in January 2022, IARC highlighted research projects supporting the WHO Global Strategy to Accelerate the Elimination of Cervical Cancer. As one key element of this research, IARC has demonstrated, for the first time, **the efficacy of a single dose of human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine in adolescent girls** in India against persistent infection with HPV types 16 and 18. Based on these IARC findings, the United Kingdom Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) has issued interim advice to reduce the number of doses of HPV vaccine from two to one for girls younger than 15 years, and this should be prioritized on resumption of the vaccination programme interrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Best regards,

**Dr Elisabete Weiderpass**  
IARC Director

• IARC News



IARC scientists are working in cross-functional Research Teams

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Professional tennis player Caroline Garcia becomes a Friend of IARC

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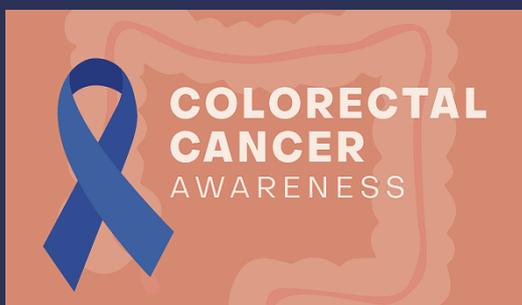
IARC launches the World Code Against Cancer Framework

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IARC marks International Women's Day 2022

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March is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

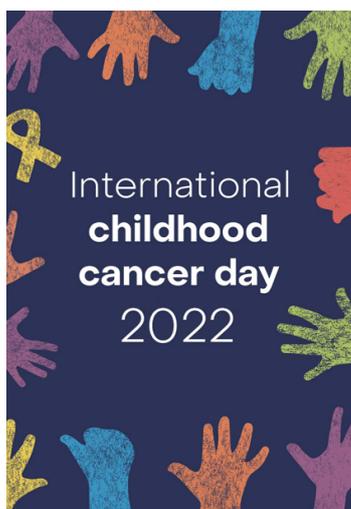
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Achieving equity in lung cancer screening for Black individuals

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- Focus on childhood cancer



### Researching the origins of childhood cancer

Mapping the epigenomes in children with cancer from birth to diagnosis can reverse the arrow of time to explore the early origins of cancer. A project of the **Epigenomics and Mechanisms Branch**, in collaboration with international partners, aims to produce molecular maps of the DNA of newborn babies, before the development of disease, to enable scientists to create a molecular snapshot of early-life factors that the baby had been exposed to during pregnancy. To mark **International Childhood Cancer Day**, IARC presented a video (available in 11 languages) explaining how IARC researchers “time-travel” to investigate the origins of childhood cancers.

[Watch the video](#)



### Targeting Childhood Cancer through the Global Initiative for Cancer Registry Development (ChildGICR)

Researchers from **St. Jude Children's Research Hospital** and the **Cancer Surveillance Branch** collaborate in a programme called ChildGICR that complements and supports the World Health Organization (WHO) **Global Initiative for Childhood Cancer**. Improving the quality and availability of data on cancer in children, particularly in countries with limited resources, is the aim of **ChildGICR**. Both partners are engaged in the programme to develop tools, build networks, and produce evidence to facilitate the establishment of new registries and to support the activities of existing structures.

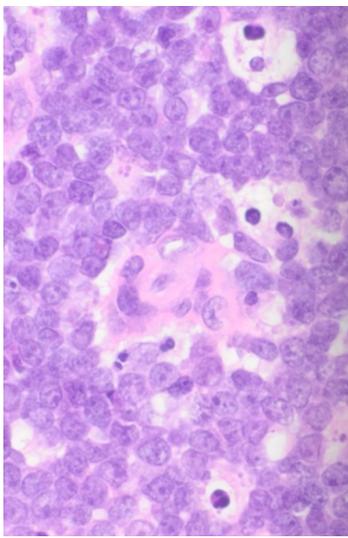
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### The role of nutrition in childhood cancer prognosis and late effects

The global burden of cancer in children is expected to rise, particularly in low- and middle-income countries where endemic rates of undernutrition are paralleled by a rapid increase in the prevalence of obesity. Dr Inge Huybrechts, a scientist in the **Nutrition and Metabolism Branch**, describes the first standardized multinational study of how nutrition and other lifestyle factors affect health outcomes in children and adolescents with acute lymphoblastic leukaemia, the most common cancer type in children.

[Watch the video](#)



## First-ever WHO Classification of Tumours volume on childhood cancers

Although paediatric tumours are uncommon, they are a leading cause of death due to disease in children. The types, molecular characteristics, and pathogenesis of tumours occurring in children are unique, and paediatric neoplasms lack the genetic complexity seen in adult disease. In a recently released video, Dr Ian A. Cree, Head of the **Evidence Synthesis and Classification Branch**, speaks about the first volume of the **WHO Classification of Tumours** series to specifically focus on the classification of paediatric tumours. The main features of each chapter of this inaugural volume are summarized in a **new review article** published in the journal *Cancer Discovery*.

[Watch the video](#)



The World Health Organization (WHO) **Global Initiative for Childhood Cancer** aims to improve outcomes for children with cancer around the world. The goal is to give all children with cancer the best chance to survive, to live full and abundant lives, and to live and die without suffering.

[Read more](#)



Thanks to financial support from **Children with Cancer UK**, Dr Grace Akinyi Odongo from Kenya and Dr Natália Spitz Toledo Dias from Brazil have been awarded **IARC Postdoctoral Fellowships** focusing on childhood cancer. Watch their testimonials and listen to their insights into their stay and work at IARC in the **Epigenomics and Mechanisms Branch**.

[Watch Grace's testimonial](#)

[Watch Natália's testimonial](#)



IARC is investigating the causes of childhood cancer and related risk factors, such as environmental exposures, lifestyle factors, and diet. In a recently published article, IARC scientists in the **Environment and Lifestyle Epidemiology Branch** and partners provide an umbrella review of environmental risk factors for childhood acute lymphoblastic leukemia.

[Read more](#)

## UICC Fellowships announcements

UICC **Technical Fellowships** support short-term international visits allowing cancer professionals to gain new skills and knowledge in cancer control. **The call is open until the end of the year**, with applicants from Francophone Africa able to **apply in French**. For the first time, the programme is accepting applications for visits of two to eight weeks, allowing applicants more flexibility and ensuring that the length of the visit can be tailored to best support the Fellowships objectives.



#cancerresearchthatmatters

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