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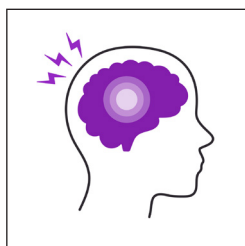
World Cancer Day
– 4 February



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World Cancer Day: United by Unique 4 February 2025

Observed annually on 4 February, World Cancer Day is a global event dedicated to raising awareness and inspiring action against cancer. This year marks the start of a powerful three-year theme: “United by Unique.”

Behind every cancer diagnosis lies a deeply personal story, shaped by emotions, challenges and triumphs: hope, pain, love, resilience, fear, strength, despair and courage. No two journeys are the same. That’s why World Cancer Day calls for a people-centred approach to cancer care—one that embraces the full complexity of the disease and prioritises outcomes that truly benefit individuals and communities.

Over the next three years, the “United by Unique” campaign will focus on creating a world where people come first. It’s a vision of healthcare that sees beyond the disease, placing the person and their needs at the heart of every system and solution.

#UnitedByUnique

“United in our goals, unique in our needs.” This credo will echo worldwide in the lead-up to 4 February 2025. Its message is simple yet profound: while every person affected by cancer has a unique story, perspective and set of needs, we are united in our shared ambition to ease the burden of cancer, improve treatment outcomes and enhance the quality of life for those impacted.

People-centred care respects and embraces individuality while fostering deeper connections - between healthcare providers and patients and within communities. World Cancer Day reminds us that everyone has a role to play in this mission:

patients, loved ones, caregivers, friends, neighbours, healthcare workers, researchers, advocates and allies alike.

Your Story Matters

To kick off the “United by Unique” campaign, everyone is encouraged to share their personal cancer stories. Whether you are living with cancer, supporting someone who is or advocating for change, your experience is important. These stories will highlight the individuality of each journey while reinforcing the message that no one is alone in facing this disease.

This year’s campaign is all about celebrating and validating each unique experience, fostering a sense of community and shared purpose among those affected by cancer.

Get Involved

There are many ways to participate in this year’s World Cancer Day:

- Share your story.
- Take part in the social media “Upside Down” campaign.
- Join local or global events.

For more information about the #UnitedByUnique campaign and how to get involved, visit: <https://www.worldcancerday.org/the-campaign>

**Your story deserves to be heard.
Your story holds power.**



Pregnancy Awareness Week

6-10 February 2025

Pregnancy is a unique journey for every woman—some may find it a joyful experience, while for others, it may come as an unexpected challenge or anything in between. No matter the circumstances, being informed and prepared can make all the difference. Whether you're pregnant or planning to conceive, understanding your options is key.

Pregnancy Testing

Pregnancy tests detect the presence of the hormone human chorionic gonadotropin (hCG) in blood or urine. You can take a test at home using kits available at most pharmacies or visit a clinic or doctor's office for confirmation. A positive home test should always be followed up with a healthcare professional.

Birth and Labour Services

Birth and labour services encompass prenatal care, pain management, relaxation techniques and delivery support. Discussing your preferences and options with your healthcare provider can help you prepare for a safe and positive birth experience.

Teenage Pregnancy

Adolescent pregnancy refers to pregnancies in women under the age of 20. These pregnancies are often accompanied by stigma and societal prejudice, as well as heightened health risks since the body may not yet be physically prepared for pregnancy. It's vital to provide young mothers with support and access to healthcare.

Termination of Pregnancy

In South Africa, women can safely terminate a pregnancy with medical assistance.

- **Up to 13 weeks:** A pregnancy can be terminated without providing reasons.

- **Between 13 and 20 weeks:** Termination is allowed under specific conditions.
- **After 20 weeks:** Termination is permitted only if the woman's life or the foetus' life is at risk, or if severe birth defects are expected.

Adoption

For mothers unable to care for their child, adoption offers a path to provide the baby with a loving home while helping couples who may struggle with infertility. To adopt a child in South Africa, prospective parents must approach an accredited adoption agency for screening and to be matched with a child in need.

Prevention of Mother-to-Child Transmission (PMTCT)

HIV-positive mothers can significantly reduce the risk of passing the virus to their baby through PMTCT programs. The first step is to take an HIV test as soon as you learn you're pregnant. With antiretroviral therapy (ART) and close medical guidance during pregnancy, delivery and postnatal care, it is possible to deliver an HIV-negative baby.

Foetal Alcohol Syndrome Prevention and Treatment

Foetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) is entirely preventable by avoiding alcohol during pregnancy. If you struggle with alcohol use, seek help as early as possible. Children born with FAS may need lifelong support, including early intervention programs, counselling for families and specialised education and training services.

Postnatal Health Care

After birth, both mother and baby need special care to adjust to their new life together. Postnatal care typically includes regular check-ups to monitor health, ensure proper recovery for the mother and support the baby's early development.

International Epilepsy Day

10 February 2025

Epilepsy is a brain disorder affecting 50 million people globally. It causes repeated seizures due to abnormal electrical activity in the brain. Seizures can range from brief lapses of awareness to severe convulsions. Having one seizure doesn't mean a person has epilepsy—it's diagnosed after two or more unprovoked seizures.

International Epilepsy Day is earmarked for the second Monday of February, which falls on 10 February this year and is used as a day to raise awareness of this disorder and educate the public, advocating for better epilepsy care. A purple ribbon is often used to signify epilepsy and to show support.

Key Facts:

- Epilepsy has existed since 4000 BCE but still faces stigma and misunderstanding.
- It can cause physical injuries, anxiety and depression.
- People with epilepsy have a higher risk of premature death, especially in low-income areas where preventable causes like falls, drowning and burns are common.

Causes of Epilepsy:

- Brain injuries (before/during birth or from accidents).
- Infections (e.g., meningitis or neurocysticercosis).
- Stroke, genetic disorders or brain tumours.
- In 50% of cases, the cause is unknown.

Treatment:

- Up to 70% of people with epilepsy could live seizure-free with proper medication.
- Treatment gaps are common in low-income countries, where

access to medicines is limited.

- Primary healthcare providers can diagnose and treat epilepsy effectively with basic training.
- Surgery may help those who don't respond to drugs.

Prevention:

- Prevent head injuries (e.g., reduce traffic and sports injuries).
- Ensure good perinatal care to prevent birth-related causes.
- Control fevers in children to avoid febrile seizures.
- Reduce stroke risk by managing cardiovascular health.
- Prevent infections like neurocysticercosis through hygiene and education.

Social & Economic Impact:

- Epilepsy affects productivity, increases healthcare costs and creates financial burdens.
- Stigma and myths about epilepsy lead to discrimination, social isolation and barriers to education, jobs and insurance.

Human Rights:

Many people with epilepsy face restrictions such as being denied a driver's license or limited access to public places. Better laws can reduce discrimination, improve healthcare access and enhance quality of life.

To find out more, please visit: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/epilepsy#:~:text=Overview-,Epilepsy%20is%20a%20chronic%20noncommunicable%20disease%20of%20the%20brain%20that,Signs%20and%20symptoms>

International
Epilepsy
Day



Human Capital

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Aon Resolution Centre (ARC)

If you do not get satisfactory assistance from your medical scheme, please do not hesitate to contact your allocated Aon Employee Benefits Healthcare Consultant or the **Aon Resolution Centre (ARC) on 0860 100 404**. Please remember to get a reference number from your medical scheme when escalating your query to the Aon Resolution Centre (ARC).

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We are pleased to inform you that Aon has negotiated a favourable underwriting window period with some Gap Cover providers for you and your family. Please contact Aon on **0860 100 404** or arc@aon.co.za for further information. You may also contact the Aon Resolution Centre should you require a comparison between your current provider and other Gap cover providers.

This is not a medical scheme and the cover is not the same as that of a medical scheme. This policy is not a substitute for medical scheme membership.

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Human Capital

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