



## Spring has Sprung: A Symbol of Hope

Native to northern Europe and widely cultivated, if it could, the daffodil would shout the arrival of spring. Rather its beautiful blossoms radiate that spring has really sprung. The daffodil, a member of the narcissus family, is a symbol of hope and has been prized around the world for generations. The early Romans thought daffodil sap had healing powers so they carried the blooms into battle. The daffodil was and is well-loved for its early bud and bright cheery colors.

With their cheerful little yellow faces, it is no wonder the Canadian Cancer Society chose daffodils as its sunny emblem of hope. Since 1948, the Canadian Cancer Society has held its door-to-door campaign in April to raise awareness and support for its work in the prevention of cancer and to improve the quality of life for those living with cancer.



Most of us either have been touched by cancer or know someone living with cancer and we know it can be a long and painful journey. The Canadian Cancer Society strives to keep us informed of the facts, correct the myths, and alert us to be cautious of misinformation from unmonitored sources while offering support to those who need it the most.

When you visit its website at [www.cancer.ca](http://www.cancer.ca), you will find these messages and many more advising that healthy living and policies that protect the health of Canadians may prevent at least half of all cancers. Risk factors you cannot change include age and family history of cancer; however, these seven steps to general good health are known to prevent cancer:

1. Be a non-smoker and avoid second-hand smoke.

2. Eat a healthy diet with at least 5–10 servings of vegetables and fruit a day.
3. Be physically active on a regular basis, which will also help you maintain a healthy body weight.
4. Protect yourself and your family when in the sun. Always wear protective clothing including sunglasses and a hat and use lots of sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or more.
5. Follow cancer screening guidelines by having regular screening tests. These tests often detect cancer when it is still early. The earlier the cancer is found, the more successful the treatment.
6. Visit your doctor or dentist if you notice any change in your body or normal state of health.
7. Follow health and safety instructions at home and at work when using, storing and disposing of hazardous materials such as pesticides and any other chemicals.

It is important to reduce the risk early. Start your kids on healthy habits they can carry through into adulthood and, like the sturdy daffodil that is resistant to cold, these healthy habits may strengthen your child's resistance to developing cancer later in life.

Daffodils are among the easiest flowers to grow and their bulbs are so strong they can survive the harshest of winters. Each year, we welcome their smiling faces popping up bringing hope – of spring and of a cancer-free Canada – now and for the future.