



# WORLD CANCER DAY

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SUPPLEMENT

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## স্বতন্ত্র যাত্রায় কবিত আমরা

## Know, check, act

Early cancer detection saves lives

TAGABUN TAHARIM TITUN

Cancer incidence in Bangladesh is rising and may more than double by 2050 if preventive measures are not strengthened. Late detection is a major contributor to high cancer morbidity and mortality in the country because many



**Do not ignore painless breast lumps, persistent voice changes, or unexplained bleeding. Starting early evaluation, especially for those over fifty or with family history, can be life-saving.**

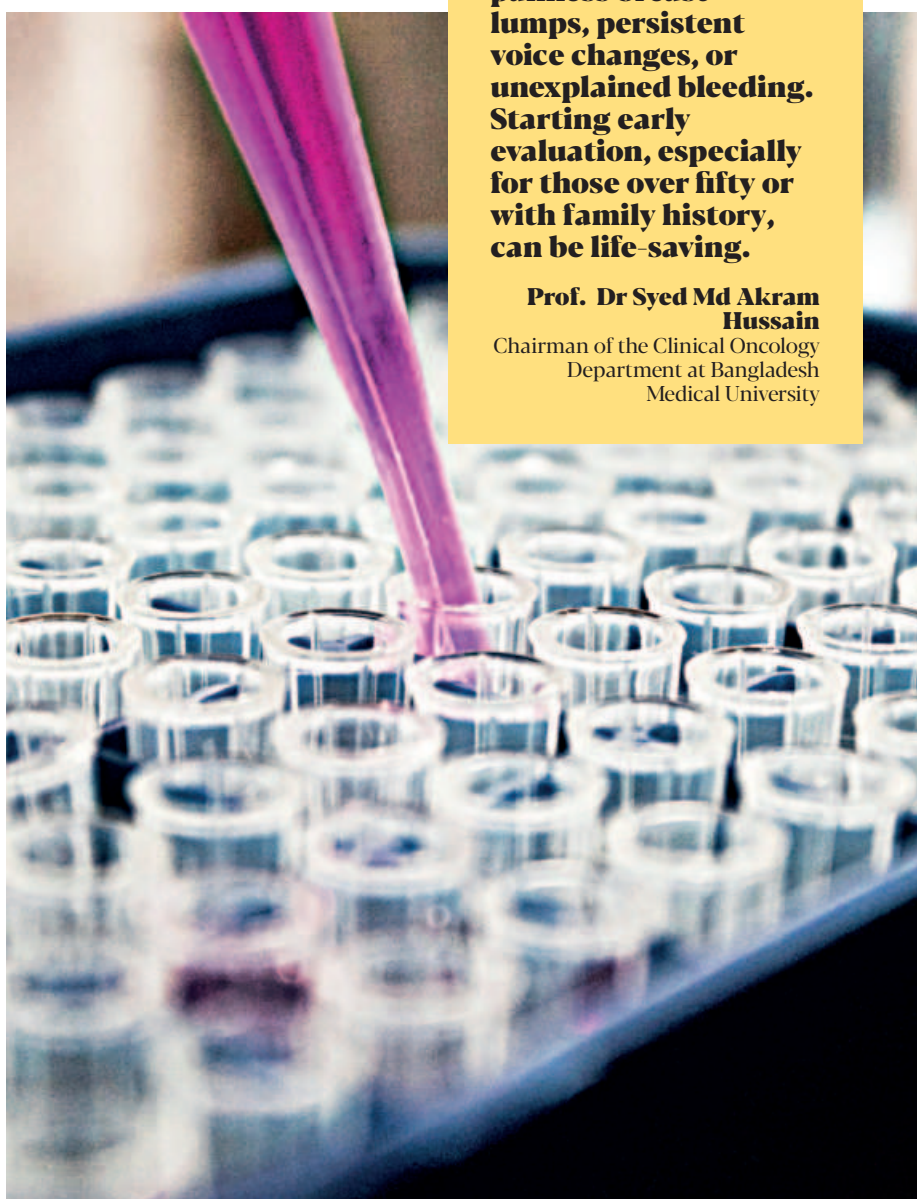
**Prof. Dr Syed Md Akram Hussain**  
Chairman of the Clinical Oncology Department at Bangladesh Medical University

patients are diagnosed at advanced stages when treatment options are limited and outcomes poor.

Globally, early detection through routine screening dramatically improves survival rates. According to World Health

o For example, breast cancer detected before the spread has significantly higher 5-year survival than cancers found at later stages, and programmes like mammography and cervical screening (Pap/VIA) have been shown to reduce deaths by enabling earlier treatment. Standard guidelines recommend regular

screening starting at specific ages tailored to cancer type, even for asymptomatic individuals, as most early cancers do not cause noticeable symptoms. Following recommended screening schedules increases chances of cure, reduces treatment burden, and saves lives.



CANCER TYPE	COMMON SYMPTOMS	RECOMMENDED SELF-CHECK / FIRST CHECK-UP AGE	GLOBAL SCREENING FREQUENCY
<b>Oesophagus</b>	Difficulty swallowing; chest/back pain; unexplained weight loss; persistent heartburn	No population screening recommended; seek medical check if symptoms occur at any age	No standard screening for general population; clinical evaluation when symptoms present
<b>Breast</b>	Lump in breast/underarm; nipple discharge; change in breast size/shape; skin dimpling	Self-breast awareness from age 20+, seven days after period ends; clinical check from 25-30	Mammography every 1-2 years from age 40-50
<b>Lung</b>	Persistent cough; coughing blood; chest pain; shortness of breath	Not for routine self-check; medical evaluation if symptoms or high risk (e.g., smoking)	Low-dose Computed Tomography (CT) yearly around the age of 50 with significant smoking history
<b>Cervical</b>	Abnormal bleeding; pelvic pain; pain during intercourse	Start pelvic exams/self-awareness by age 21	Pap smear / HPV testing every 3-5 years starting age 21-25 to 65; in low-resource settings, VIA may be used every 3 years
<b>Colorectal</b>	Change in bowel habits; blood in stool; abdominal discomfort; unintended weight loss	Begin awareness at age 40-45	Colonoscopy or similar test every 10 years starting from age 45-50

SOURCES: WHO, NATIONAL LIBRARY OF MEDICINE, BANGLADESH SOCIETY OF COLPOSCOPY AND CERVICAL PATHOLOGY, INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES.