

Health Awareness

Our Journey To Conquer Cancer Needs More Fuel

by Bruce E. Johnson, M.D., FASCO,
President of the American Society of
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(NAPSA)—When I became a cancer doctor more than three decades ago, I could not have imagined the dramatic progress we would make in the fight against this disease. We can detect cancer earlier, target treatments more effectively in many patients, and manage side effects so that patients live longer, better lives. There are more than 15.5 million cancer survivors alive in the United States today. Since 1991, we have avoided 2.1 million cancer-related deaths. That's 2.1 million sisters, brothers, husbands, wives, parents, children, best friends and loved ones, all alive because we have improved our understanding of cancer—how to prevent and treat it.



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rare cancers, and comparative effectiveness, which usually are not profitable for companies. Instead, federally funded cancer research serves as the engine of discovery that companies depend on to fuel the development of new drugs—

People with cancer are living better and longer,
thanks to our nation's investment in cancer research

▼ **23%**

**DECLINE IN CANCER
DEATH RATE**

Since a peak in 1991

90+

**CANCER DRUGS
APPROVED BY
THE FDA SINCE
2006**



**INCREASED
5-YEAR SURVIVAL**

2 out of 3 people with
cancer live at least 5
years after diagnosis

▲ **15.5M**

**CANCER
SURVIVORS**

Up from 11.4 million in 2006



Progress has been possible because of our nation's extraordinarily generous and enduring commitment to cancer research. Federal funding for cancer research has driven many of the most important prevention and treatment advances of the last 50 years, such as unlocking the major cause of cervical cancer, proving that lung cancer screening can save lives, and helping women survive breast cancer without disfiguring surgery. These advances have been principally supported by government agencies, have changed how we survive cancer and have improved millions of lives.

The progress we have made shows us what is possible to achieve. Cutting-edge science now makes it possible to target treatment to specific cancers, letting patients have long and productive lives. Despite this, some cancers are stubbornly difficult to treat, and cancer remains a formidable challenge. Millions of people stand to benefit if we accelerate our progress.

Congress is considering how much funding to provide to the National Cancer Institute (NCI), which supports the bulk of federally funded cancer research. NCI supports studies that private industry has little incentive to conduct, such as research into prevention and screening,

helping make the United States the global leader in new cancer treatments.

Although Congress recently gave a one-time boost for cancer research, this occurred after many years of inadequate support. We need to regain momentum. Public investment in cancer research offers hope to millions of people with cancer and their families, who need access to federally funded clinical trials. These often provide patients the best opportunities to access the newest and best treatment options while helping us understand how best to treat everyone. Patients with cancer need the United States to continue its long tradition of leadership in innovation. They need us to push the frontiers of knowledge and insight about cancer. They need new treatments made possible by a robust national cancer research system.

Many Americans are telling their elected officials to support an increase in federal funding for cancer research. Lawmakers can be reached at www.house.gov and www.senate.gov.

Learn More

For further facts and stats about federal funding for cancer research and the last 50 years of progress against cancer, go to www.asco.org/nihfunding.