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PREVENTION OF CANCER: TOWARD A NATIONAL ABC FRAMEWORK.

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The percentage of cancer cases that appear to be related to environmental and behavioural factors is about 80%. Smoking especially, but also heavy alcohol consumption, bad nutritional habits (fat and burned food consumption) and excessive sunbathing, are related to cancer and are behaviours which can be modified. A basic ABC framework has been formulated for a national policy on cancer prevention, research and implementation of programmes. This stresses: A, analysis of relevant health problems, their determinants and the target groups involved. B. the status of behavioural change interventions: e.g, health education, supporting policies, experimental implementation, evaluations. C. the continuation and maintenance of behavioural change.

The following strategies are proposed.

1. Prevention programmes on smoking, excessive alcohol use, and bad nutrition styles will have to be developed for adolescents and subjected to test in an experimental design.
2. Effective cessation programmes will need to be developed on smoking, alcohol and bad nutrition. One recent innovation in this field is the impact of self-efficacy expectations of individuals.
3. Successful health educational programmes need to be supported by health-supporting policies leading to a more effective health promotion strategy.
4. Tendency to focus on several behaviour patterns is likely to increase the credibility of health education for the target group.
- 5 Behavioural change programmes should use both cognitive and affective methods of information transmission.
6. Successful programmes will be required to be implemented nationally, since prevention of cancer is a long term goal and one which cannot be achieved by one single intervention.