Early detection is an essential component of cancer control.

Cancer early detection involves detecting cancers at early stages when they can be effectively treated and cured. Improved awareness among the general public and health care providers of early cancer, as well as good access to effective health services, can lead to earlier clinical diagnosis and prompt treatment. Screening programs for asymptomatic, apparently healthy populations are resource-intensive interventions, and should be undertaken only when their effectiveness has been demonstrated, when health services are adequately developed to investigate, treat and follow up screen-positive individuals, and when there is a sufficiently high incidence of the disease to justify the effort and costs of screening.

Screening programs vary between countries in how they are conducted.

Countries with large-scale colorectal screening programs
- Have a large-scale screening program
- No large-scale screening program

In several high-income countries, cervical cancer incidence has shown a marked decrease with the advent of screening programs.

Screening programs vary between countries in how they are conducted.

“...To keep the body in good health is a duty...otherwise we shall not be able to keep our mind strong and clear.”
—Buddha