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LIFE/HEALTH

THE WAY WE LIVE AND WHY

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## A World of Difference

Cancer isn't just emotionally devastating. New research shows that the global economic toll is huge. But it doesn't have to be that way.



Jessica Rinaldi / Reuters-Landov

Lance Armstrong (left) and Michael Bloomberg meet with cancer patient Marie McKinney and friend at a hospital in Austin, TX earlier this year.

By Lance Armstrong and Michael Bloomberg | Newsweek Web Exclusive

Feb 4, 2010

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Today is World Cancer Day. Most of us, however, are affected by cancer every day—by the memories of loved ones we've lost, by the struggle for survival that friends and family members are enduring, or by our own experiences battling the disease. Tragically, far too many people who should beat cancer die from it. In fact, 60 percent of all cancer is preventable, and one third can be cured if detected early and treated effectively.

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The problem of preventable deaths is most prevalent in developing nations, where those with curable cancers simply don't get the medicine they need to live, because they either don't have access to care or they're diagnosed too late. And others, sadly, fight not only a disease but the prejudice and stigma that go hand in hand with it in many cultures. In India, researchers from LIVESTRONG, the Lance Armstrong Foundation's global movement to support those affected by cancer, encountered a heartbroken young man battling cancer in virtual isolation. Afraid of contracting cancer, his friends avoided him and his community cut him off. But the problem isn't isolated to developing nations. Even in America, the wealthiest country in the world, too many are dying needlessly from cancer every year, and the No. 1 cause of cancer is the same here as it is around the world: tobacco. Nearly 20 percent of all deaths in the United States every year result from tobacco use.

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unemployed than those who have not been affected by the disease. **Scrap Cap-and-Trade** **Redheads Fear the Dentist, And Tall Men Get Cancer**

First, we have to help people quit smoking and convince more young people not to start. In New York and in more and more cities and countries around the world, we've seen how smart tobacco-control policies can save lives and improve business climates. In New York, a ban on indoor smoking, an increase in the cigarette tax, and a wide-ranging smoking-cessation program have shrunk the number of people smoking by 350,000 and saved more than 100,000 lives. At the same time, the number of jobs in bars and restaurants has increased, making believers even out of the most skeptical cynics.

All cities, states, and countries should adopt comprehensive tobacco-control programs, for both health and economic reasons. The need for action is especially urgent in the developing world, where smoking is on the rise. If no action is taken, tobacco may kill a *billion* or more people in the 21st century.

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2/3/10: Several NEWSWEEK staff members, who have never before seen an episode of the hit ABC drama, watch clips from the show and attempt to explain the mysteries and plot twists that occur. (Video: K. Ryan Jones)



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