



Every cancer. Every life.®

Colorectal Cancer Awareness Employer Toolkit 2025



Aflac is proud to sponsor the American Cancer Society Employer Wellness Toolkits.

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We thank Aflac for sponsoring this toolkit and supporting our shared efforts to raise awareness about the critical role cancer screening and early detection have in helping prevent and mitigate the impact of cancer. Learn more at cancer.org/Aflac.



How to Use This Colorectal Cancer Employer Toolkit

Your organization can help save lives by promoting colorectal cancer awareness and helping to deliver important messaging to your employees. At the American Cancer Society, we have a vision to end cancer as we know it, for everyone.

We are pleased to be working with your company to help your employees and their families take steps to help prevent cancer and better understand their cancer risk.

This toolkit presents turnkey messages to effectively communicate the importance of colorectal cancer screening with your employees. Messages highlight:



Colorectal cancer facts and statistics



Information about colorectal cancer screening



American Cancer Society resources for people with cancer

The toolkit is currently available only in English, but the American Cancer Society does offer information about cancer, including prevention, early detection, treatment, and managing side effects, [in 13 languages](#). Additionally, our 24/7 Cancer Helpline is available to assist in more than 200 languages.

This toolkit is copyrighted by the American Cancer Society (ACS). Please be sure to cite ACS as your source of information when offering the enclosed information to your employees. The information in this document is updated and accurate. Changing the text or content of this toolkit could also change the accuracy of its medical content and is not permitted. The permitted use of this toolkit is for non-commercial educational purposes only for your company to inform and educate your employees about cancer screening and prevention. It should not be used for any other purpose, including, without limitation, sharing with outside parties, used for marketing purposes, or used in any way to state or imply that ACS endorses you or your products or services. If you have an interest in utilizing the information in this toolkit for marketing purposes or sharing this toolkit with others, please contact your ACS staff partner. Thank you again for your commitment to helping save lives in the workplace.

Email and Newsletter Messages

Colorectal Cancer Facts



Tip: Company-wide emails and newsletters are effective ways to share messages with your employees.

The following messages can help inform your employees about colorectal cancer and screening.

Message #1

Get the Facts on Colorectal Cancer

Colorectal cancer is a common cancer in the United States. [Here's what you need to know.](#)

[What is colorectal cancer?](#)

- Colorectal cancer occurs when cells in the colon or rectum start growing out of control. The colon and rectum make up the large intestine (or large bowel), which is part of the digestive system.
- These cancers can also be called colon cancer or rectal cancer, depending on where they start. Colon cancer and rectal cancer are often grouped together. This is because they have many common features.

[How many people get colorectal cancer?](#)

- About 1 in 24 men and 1 in 26 women will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer in their lifetime.
- In 2025, it is estimated that there will be about 154,270 new cases of colorectal cancer.

[How serious is colorectal cancer?](#)

- Colorectal cancer is the second most common cause of cancer death when numbers for men and women are combined. Colorectal cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in those younger than age 50.
- The death rate from colorectal cancer has been dropping in older adults for several decades. This is likely due to colorectal cancer screening and improvements in treatments.
- In people younger than age 55, however, death rates have been increasing about 1% per year since the mid-2000s.

The American Cancer Society® recommends that people [know their risk of colorectal cancer and get regular screening.](#)

For information on colorectal cancer, visit the American Cancer Society website at cancer.org/coloncancer or call 1-800-227-2345.

(Source: American Cancer Society)

Email and Newsletter Messages (cont'd)

Colorectal Cancer Facts (cont'd)



Tip: Instead of sharing just one message with employees, consider sending multiple messages as an e-blast or newsletter series.

Message #2

Colorectal Cancer Awareness: Know the Symptoms

Colorectal cancer affects about 1 in 24 men and 1 in 26 women. It's important to know the symptoms. You should talk with your health care provider if you notice any of them.

Colorectal cancer might not cause symptoms right away. If it does, it may cause one or more of these symptoms:

- A change in bowel habits, such as diarrhea, constipation, or narrowing of the stool, that lasts for more than a few days
- A feeling that you need to have a bowel movement that's not relieved by having one
- Rectal bleeding with bright red blood
- Blood in the stool, which might make the stool look dark brown or black
- Cramping or abdominal (belly) pain
- Weakness and fatigue
- Unintended weight loss

Many of these symptoms can also be caused by conditions other than cancer. They could be symptoms of conditions like an infection, hemorrhoids, or inflammatory bowel disease. Still, it's important to see a health care provider right away so the cause can be found and treated, if needed.

If you don't have any symptoms, you can still talk to your health care provider. [Ask about when you should start regular screening for colorectal cancer.](#)

For information on colorectal cancer, visit the American Cancer Society® website at cancer.org/coloncancer or call 1-800-227-2345.

(Source: American Cancer Society)

Email and Newsletter Messages (cont'd)

Colorectal Cancer Facts (cont'd)



Tip: To reinforce messages, host an educational event (guest speaker, health fair, etc.) for employees.

Message #3

Colorectal Cancer Awareness: Know Your Risk

Everyone is at risk of developing colorectal cancer. But some people have a higher risk than others. It's important to understand these risk factors for your health.

Colorectal cancer risk factors

[Some risk factors for colorectal cancer you cannot change.](#)

Some of these factors include:

- Age
- Racial and ethnic background
- Sex at birth
- Genetics
- Personal or family history of colorectal cancer
- Personal history of inflammatory bowel disease
- Previous radiation to the abdomen or pelvis area

Lifestyle and colorectal cancer risk

[Lifestyle risk factors are those that can be changed.](#)

Some of these factors include:

- Being overweight or obese
- Type 2 diabetes
- Diets high in red meats (such as beef, pork, or lamb) and processed meats (such as hot dogs and some lunch meats)
- Smoking
- Alcohol consumption

Ask about your health care provider about your risk for colorectal cancer. Together, you can decide when to begin regular screening.

For information on colorectal cancer, visit the American Cancer Society® website at cancer.org/coloncancer or call 1-800-227-2345.

(Source: American Cancer Society)

Email and Newsletter Messages (cont'd)

Importance of Colorectal Cancer Screening



Tip: Consider raising colorectal cancer awareness at your workplace during Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month in March.

Message #1

Colorectal Cancer Awareness: Recommendations for Screening

Are you age 45 or older? Then it's time to talk with a health care provider about getting screened for colorectal cancer.

Why get screened?

1 in 5 colorectal cancer cases are now in people under age 55. Colorectal cancer often doesn't cause symptoms until it spreads. That's why the American Cancer Society® recommends regular colorectal cancer screening for people at average risk starting at age 45.

Some people may need to start screening earlier. Or they may need to be tested more often. This could be the case if you have a family history of colorectal polyps or cancer or have other risk factors.

When colorectal cancer is found early, before it has spread, the 5-year survival rate is about 91%. This means 9 out of 10 people with early-stage colorectal cancer survive at least 5 years. If the cancer has spread, survival rates are lower.

What tests are available for screening?

A [colonoscopy](#) is often recommended because it looks at the entire colon. A screening colonoscopy can also prevent some colorectal cancers by finding and removing polyps (small growths that can cause cancer) before they turn into cancer. Colonoscopies are recommended every 10 years for people at average risk. You can view a [3D animation of a colonoscopy](#) on the American Cancer Society website.

[Stool-based tests](#) are another option that check for signs of colon cancer in the stool (feces). Stool-based tests can be done at home. These tests need to be done more often – either yearly or every 3 years – depending on the test.

If you choose a test other than colonoscopy, any abnormal test results should be followed up with a timely colonoscopy.

There are some differences between these tests to consider. **But the most important thing is to get screened.** Talk with your health care provider to find out which screening tests are right for you.

For information on colorectal cancer, visit the American Cancer Society website at cancer.org/coloncancer or call 1-800-227-2345.

(Source: American Cancer Society)

Email and Newsletter Messages (cont'd)

Importance of Colorectal Cancer Screening (cont'd)



Tip: Encourage employee special interest groups to take on colorectal cancer screening as a quarterly focus. Use these messages to support the effort.

Message #2

Colorectal Cancer Awareness: Can Screening Benefit You?

Colorectal cancer is now the leading cause of cancer death in people under age 50. Did you know that regular screening can help prevent colorectal cancer? Screening can also help find colorectal cancer early, when treatment is more likely to be successful.

Regular screening is one of the best ways to find colorectal cancer at an early stage. When people don't get colorectal cancer screening tests, a cancer can grow and spread without being noticed.

Unfortunately, about 1 in 3 people in the United States who should get tested for colorectal cancer have never been screened. This may be because they don't know that regular testing could help save their lives from this disease, or due to things like cost and [health insurance coverage issues](#).

Talk to your doctor about screening.

People at average risk should start colorectal cancer screening at age 45. Some people with certain risk factors may need to start screening earlier. Talk to your health care provider to find out what screening plan is best for you.

For information on colorectal cancer, visit the American Cancer Society® website at cancer.org/coloncancer or call 1-800-227-2345.

(Source: American Cancer Society)

Email and Newsletter Messages (cont'd)

Importance of Colorectal Cancer Screening (cont'd)



Tip: Promote cancer screening during organizational health and well-being campaigns.

Message #3

Colorectal Cancer Awareness: Are You Due to Get Screened?

Did you know that regular screening can help prevent colorectal cancer? Screening can also help find colorectal cancer early, when treatment is more likely to be successful.

The American Cancer Society® recommends that people at average risk of colorectal cancer **start regular screening at age 45**. This can be done multiple ways:

Stool-based Tests

- Can be done at home
- Low cost
- No bowel prep or sedation
- Done every year or every 3 years, depending on which test you do

If a person chooses to be screened with a test other than colonoscopy, any abnormal test result should be followed up with a timely colonoscopy.

Visual Exams

- Types of tests include colonoscopy or flexible sigmoidoscopy
- Done in health facility
- Bowel prep needed
- Can remove and test polyps (small growths that can cause cancer)
- Done every 5 or 10 years, depending on which test you do

There are some differences between the tests to consider. **But the most important thing is to get screened—no matter which test you take.**

You may be at [high risk](#) of colorectal cancer if you have a family history or have certain health conditions. Ask your doctor about your risk and see if you should start screening earlier than age 45.

For information on colorectal cancer, visit the American Cancer Society website at cancer.org/coloncancer or call 1-800-227-2345.

(Source: American Cancer Society)

Social Media Messages



Social media is another way you can convey the importance colorectal cancer awareness to members of your organization. Select social media platforms are mentioned below. However, these messages can also be used across other platforms.



Tip: Connect with the American Cancer Society on [X](#), [Facebook](#), and [LinkedIn](#) to re-share content for your employees and audiences.

LinkedIn

- Colorectal cancer is now the leading cause of cancer death in people under age 50 years. As employees of [ORGANIZATION NAME], let's do our part to help reduce the impact of this disease. The American Cancer Society can help you learn more about the disease and the importance of regular screening. Visit cancer.org/coloncancer for more information. #cancerprevention
- Colorectal cancer is the second most common cancer in men and women combined. Do you know your risk? At [ORGANIZATION NAME], we encourage you to learn all you can about your personal risk for colorectal cancer and the guidelines for screening. The American Cancer Society can help. Visit cancer.org/coloncancer for more information. #cancerprevention

Facebook

- [ORGANIZATION NAME] community! Make sure the important people in your life have the latest information about the early detection of #colorectalcancer. Being informed can help save lives! Visit cancer.org/coloncancer to learn more.
- [ORGANIZATION NAME]: Did you know there is more than one option for #colorectalcancer screening? If you're age 45 or older, ask your doctor about the available options for you. Visit cancer.org/coloncancer to learn more.

Instagram (captions to pair with posts)

- Are you or a loved one experiencing #colorectalcancer? Did you know that the @americancancersociety offers support programs for people with cancer and provides them with the information they need throughout their cancer journey? #everycancereverylife #youarenotalone
- Everyone is at risk for #colorectalcancer. But did you know your risk is affected by things like your age, family history, and other health conditions? @americancancersociety recommends talking to your doctors about when you should start regular screening. Schedule your appointment today! #everycancereverylife #youarenotalone

X (formerly Twitter)

- Are you age 45 or older? @AmericanCancer recommends you get regular screening for colorectal cancer if you are at average risk. Learn more about your risk and screening options on cancer.org/coloncancer.
- 1 in 5 colorectal cancer cases are now in people under age 55. It may be time to talk to your doctor about if screening for colorectal cancer is right for you. Learn more on cancer.org/coloncancer.



Sharing Personal Stories



Tip: Lead by example! Have executives and managers share their own screening stories.

Many people who have been screened for colorectal cancer have a story to share. You can feature these stories in messaging campaigns.

Collect the following information:

- Name and age
- Was this your first colorectal cancer screening?
- Why did you decide to get screened?
- Describe your experience.
- If you would like, please share if the screening showed anything unusual.
- What would you tell people who haven't yet been screened?

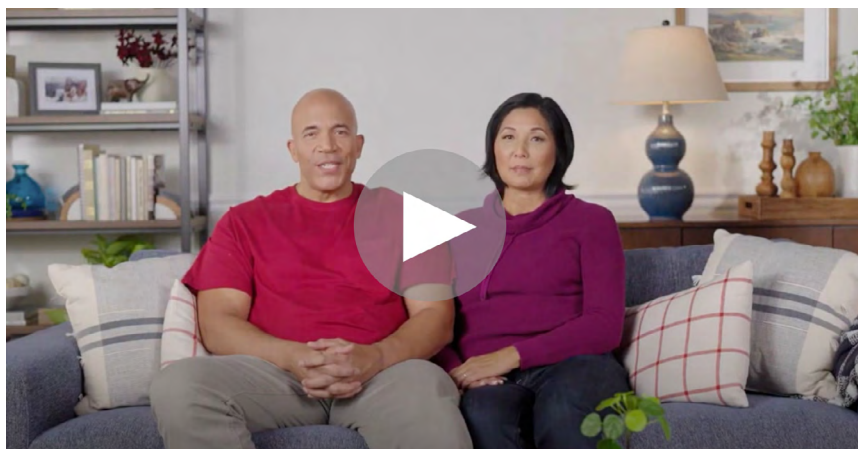
Story collection should be voluntary and only be done with people who have given their express permission. Story collection is subject to each company's applicable policies related to privacy and health information.

Colorectal Cancer Videos and Animation

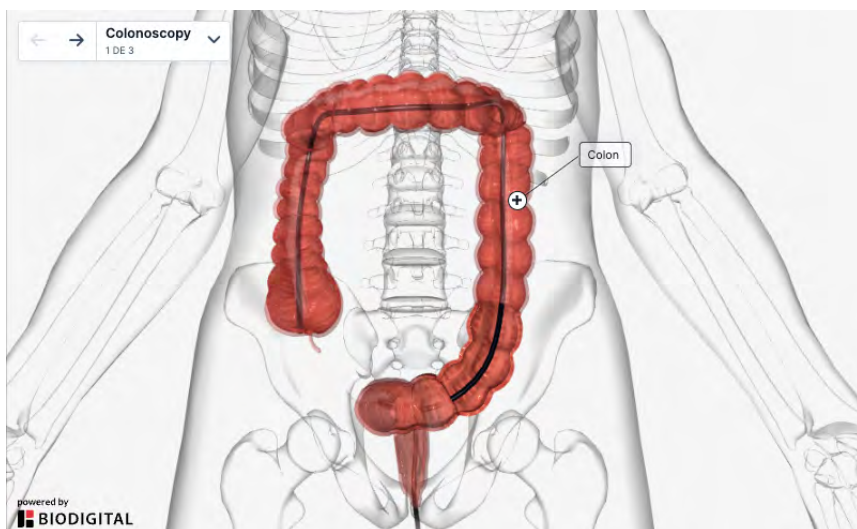


Tip: Link to or embed these URLs within messages that you share with your employees.

Video and animation content can be an engaging way to share information.



This video provides information about colorectal cancer. It talks about who should get screened and what screening is like. https://youtu.be/s36p4DIl4w0?si=rx_MnOfIU87VF3k1



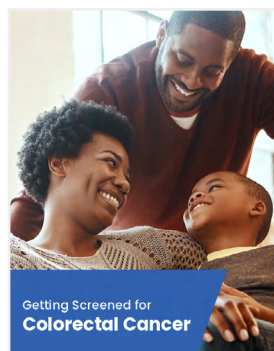
Explore a 3D interactive animation of how a doctor will screen the colon and rectum for cancer during a colonoscopy. <https://www.cancer.org/cancer/diagnosis-staging/tests/endoscopy/colonoscopy.html>

Colorectal Cancer Educational Materials



Tip! In addition to sharing digital resources with employees, consider having printed copies available in your workplace.

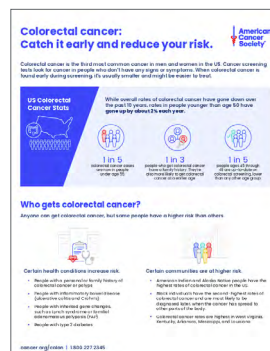
Here are some easy-to-read American Cancer Society resources that are available to your organization.



[Getting Screened for Colorectal Cancer](#)



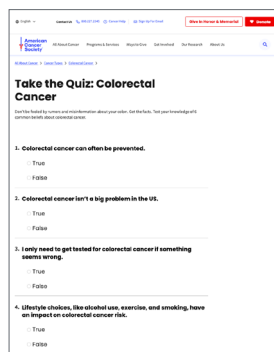
[You Can Help Prevent Colorectal Cancer](#)



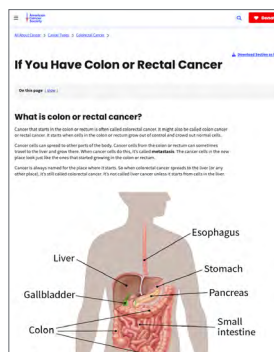
[Infographic: Colorectal Cancer: Catching It Early](#)



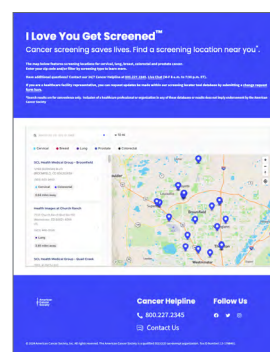
[Colorectal Cancer Fact Sheet for Patients and Caregivers](#)



[Take the Quiz: Colorectal Cancer](#)



[If You Have Colon or Rectal Cancer](#)



[I Love You. Get Screened™: Locator Map](#)

Visit cancer.org/materials to print, email, or order educational materials.

American Cancer Society Resources for People With Cancer



Some of your employees may have cancer or may have a loved one with the disease. You can use these messages to familiarize employees with American Cancer Society [programs and services](#). They can help them through their cancer journey.



Tip: Implement a signup event for employees who may want to [volunteer](#) with the American Cancer Society.

Message #1

The American Cancer Society offers cancer support, whenever you need it.

Have you or has someone you know been affected by cancer? Support is available through the American Cancer Society®. The organization offers resources to help with:

- [Getting rides to treatment](#)
- [Finding a place to stay during treatment](#)
- [Accessing easy-to-read cancer information](#)
- [Giving guidance to help manage your cancer experience or that of a loved one](#)

When you visit the [American Cancer Society online](#), you have access to free, easy-to-understand [cancer information in 13 languages](#) to help you find the information you need when you need it most. This information is available to help you make decisions during diagnosis, treatment, and beyond. Additionally, our 24/7 Cancer Helpline is available to assist in more than 200 languages.

Visit the American Cancer Society website at [cancer.org](#) or call 1-800-227-2345 for more information.

(Source: American Cancer Society)

American Cancer Society Resources for People With Cancer (cont'd)



Tip: In addition to sharing these resources, consider creating a “buddy” program that allows employees experiencing cancer to support one another.

Message #2

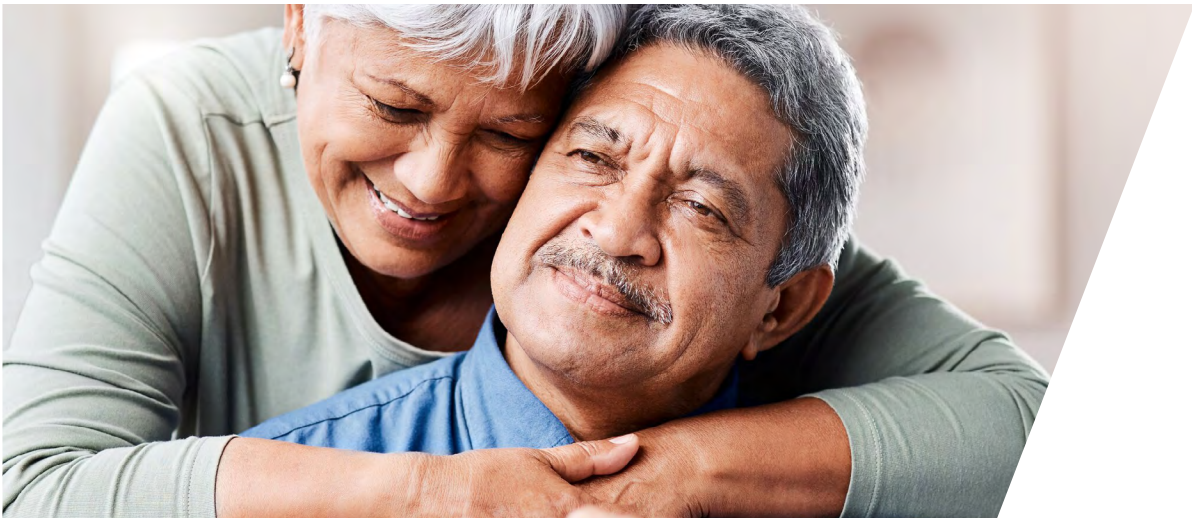
Connect with the American Cancer Society cancer community.

People with cancer and those who care about them don't have to face their cancer experience alone. Did you know that the American Cancer Society® can help? They offer support programs for people with cancer and provide the information they need throughout their cancer journey:

- [Cancer Survivors NetworkSM \(CSN\)](#): This is a safe online community where patients, survivors, and caregivers support each other, ask questions, and share practical tips. With a chatroom and over 40 discussion boards, CSN connects individuals who have a similar cancer experience. Visit csn.cancer.org, find out more.
- [Road To Recovery[®]](#): This program helps ease your burden by giving free rides to cancer-related medical appointments. Trained volunteer drivers are happy to pick you up, take you to your appointment, and drop you off at home. Not having a ride shouldn't stand between you and treatment. Visit cancer.org/roadtorecovery to learn more.
- [Cancer information](#): Caring, trained American Cancer Society cancer helpline specialists are available 24/7 to answer questions about cancer and connect people with resources to help meet needs that emerge throughout the cancer continuum. Services are provided 365 days a year via a toll-free helpline (1-800-227-2345) in English, Spanish, and more than 200 other languages through a translation service. Additionally, online live chat sessions are available in English on weekdays. Visit cancer.org/about-us/online-help/contact-us for more information.
- [ACS CARES[™] \(Community Access to Resources, Education, and Support\)](#): This mobile app provides people with cancer and their families curated content, programs, and services to fit their specific cancer journey. Users can access personalized, quality cancer-related information and resources that update as they age, a situation changes, or new information becomes available. Through the app, users can speak directly to American Cancer Society cancer information experts or meet virtually with others who have gone through a similar experience.
- [ACS CancerRisk360[™]](#): To improve cancer prevention and risk reduction, the American Cancer Society developed ACS CancerRisk360[™]. This interactive online tool provides a personalized, comprehensive assessment of cancer risk along with resources to empower and enable individuals to help reduce their risk of cancer through healthy lifestyles, regular cancer screening, and genetic counseling and testing direction.

Visit the American Cancer Society website at cancer.org or call 1-800-227-2345 for more information.

(Source: American Cancer Society)



Get Involved

The American Cancer Society exists to improve the lives of people with cancer and their families. We invite you and your employees to join us to ensure everyone has a fair and just opportunity to prevent, detect, treat, and survive cancer. You can find all the opportunities near you in [the American Cancer Society Volunteer Community](#).

Name	What they do	What you can do
Road To Recovery®	Provide transportation to treatment and other cancer-related appointments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Become a volunteer driver.• Create safety travel kits for volunteer drivers.
Hope Lodge®	Offer free lodging to people facing cancer and their caregiver when treatment is far from home.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Help make meals.• Provide entertainment.• Ensure that guests feel welcome during their stay.
Community events like: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Relay For Life®• ResearchHERS: Women Fighting Cancer™• Men Wear Pink®• Gold Together• Making Strides Against Breast Cancer®	Promote cancer awareness while engaging in the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sign up to lead or join a team.• Join a planning committee.• Volunteer your time to support an event through a one-day community giveback opportunity.
ACS CARES™	Empower patients throughout their cancer journey by providing information and support through an app.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Become a virtual community volunteer and exchange messages via the ACS CARES app with people throughout their cancer journey.

- There are also virtual opportunities to give back:
- [Virtual Challenges](#)
 - [Health Equity Ambassadors](#)
 - [Advocate for Policy Change](#)
 - [Employee Engagement with the American Cancer Society](#)