



Foundations of Cancer Disease Sites Series

Colorectal Cancer

COURSE SYLLABUS (CDSM00COLORECTALODM24)

2025-2027

Course Facilitators:

Donalda MacDonald, RN, CON(C)

Margaret Forbes RN(EC), MN, NP, CON(C)

Course Format: eLearning

Contact Information:

Donalda MacDonald: Donalda.MacDonald@desouzainstitute.com

Margaret Forbes: Margaret.Forbes@desouzainstitute.com

Technical Support: support@desouzainstitute.com

Registration: Required

Prerequisite: *Cancer Care Basics*

This course is an update of the disease sites information in the Foundations of Oncology Nursing Practice – on demand (FOND) course, which covered breast, lung, colorectal and prostate cancer. **If you have completed Foundations in Oncology Nursing Practice prior to 2025, do not take this course unless you wish to review an updated version of the previous disease site content.**

A. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Colorectal cancer (CRC) is one of the most common cancers diagnosed in Canada. Fortunately, it is also one of the most preventable cancers. Screening programs across Canada are diagnosing CRC at earlier stages and outcomes are significantly better than just a few decades ago. This course introduces you to CRC, covering the foundational knowledge you need to provide nursing care to patients with CRC and their families. This online course builds on what you learned in *Foundations of Oncology Nursing Practice* or *Cancer Care Basics*.

This course has **two modules and a final quiz**.

- **Module 1 Pathology and Epidemiology:** covers normal anatomy of the colon, pathogenesis of CRC, and risk factors that put people at higher risk of developing CRC.
- **Module 2 Diagnosis, Staging and Treatment:** covers screening guidelines, presenting symptoms, the diagnostic pathway, staging, and treatments for each stage.
- The **final quiz** is a case study where you will apply your knowledge to the care of a patient living with colorectal cancer.

This is a self-paced course, meaning you complete the course at your own pace, but complete it within **6 weeks from the time you register** for the course (this date is found on the course information page in *My Account*).

B. COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Describe the gross anatomical features of the colon and colon wall
- Describe pathogenesis of colorectal cancer (CRC)
- Discuss risk factors that are associated with developing CRC
- Describe the main prognostic factor associated with CRC
- Explain Canadian CRC screening recommendations for low vs. high-risk individuals
- Describe signs & symptoms suspicious for CRC
- Describe the general diagnostic pathway for CRC
- Explain the treatment of CRC (surgery, radiation therapy, systemic therapy) based on cancer stage, gene mutation, and tumour location
- List the recommended follow-up activities post-treatment for CRC

Course content and resources provided in this course are based on best practice guidelines from provincial and national bodies. Local protocols and policies vary among healthcare

organizations; please consult educators within your organization if you have specific questions related to local protocols and policies.

C. de Souza DESIGNATION CREDITS

Domain of Practice Treatment and Delivery of Evidence Based Care

Learning Hours 3 hours

de Souza Credit *You must complete a **minimum of 3** foundations of disease sites courses to earn de Souza credits.*

3 disease sites = 0.125 credits

6 disease sites = 0.25 credits

9 disease sites = 0.325 credits

12 and over disease sites = 0.5 credits

About the *Foundations of Cancer Disease Sites Series*

The *Foundations of Cancer Disease Sites Series* will consist of **over twenty cancer disease site courses** that you can select and combine to fit your clinical practice needs.

- Sarcoma
- Skin cancer
- Esophageal cancer
- Stomach cancer
- Pancreatic cancer
- Liver cancer
- Kidney Cancer
- Testicular Cancer
- Brain Cancer
- Lung Cancer
- Breast Cancer
- Prostate Cancer
- Hematological Malignancies
- Cervix Cancer
- Ovarian Cancer
- Bladder Cancer

We will continue to update and add cancer disease sites to the course series:

<https://www.desouzainstitute.com/cdsm>

D. MODE OF LEARNING

The eLearning environment fosters a self-directed approach. You can progress through the modules and exercises at a convenient time, at home or work.

- **eLearning Modules:** Modules were developed by the de Souza education team to reflect the latest knowledge in colorectal cancer. The content is up-to-date and includes interactive application exercises and links to the latest clinical guidelines. There are downloadable PDFs as well.
- **Study Guides:** A fillable ± printable study guide is available for each module that you can print and fill in as you progress through the interactive course modules.

E. MODES OF EVALUATION

As part of the evaluation process, you are required to complete the following:

- **Participant Baseline Survey:** This survey assesses your knowledge, attitude, confidence before you begin the eLearning modules for the course.
- **eLearning modules:** You must complete all modules by course end date.
- **Final Quiz:** There is one case-study based quiz in this course consisting of 10 questions. You must answer 7/10 questions correctly (70%) to pass. **Note:** the quiz is open book and you have two attempts at the quiz to achieve a passing grade. You are required to complete the quiz independently.
- **Participant Post-course Evaluation:** At the end of the course, this evaluation collects your feedback about whether the content met your professional practice needs. These surveys are facilitated electronically through eLearning

When you have successfully met all the above requirements, you will receive **3 learning hours** as well as credit towards obtaining your de Souza designation. An email will be sent to you containing instructions on how to download your **certificate of completion** via your “My Account”.

F. EXPECTATIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS

Expect to dedicate 1-2 hours weekly to complete this course within the 6 week timeframe.

Your course activity completion will be reflected in your **grade book**. You must complete all modules and all other course requirements within **6 weeks from the time you register** for the course. You can find your course completion date in your MyAccount.

G. FACILITATOR AVAILABILITY

This course is **self-directed**. However, a course facilitator is available to:

- Answer your questions related to course content
- Collaborate with you to problem solve challenges related to course quizzes and course completion.

You can expect the facilitator to respond to your questions within 24-hours during the week and within 48 hours on the weekend.

Your facilitators are:

- Donalda MacDonald: Donalda.MacDonald@desouzainstitute.com
- Margaret Forbes: Margaret.Forbes@desouzainstitute.com

Technical support is available by contacting support@desouzainstitute.com

H. COURSE AUTHORS & FACILITATORS

Course Author & Facilitator

Donalda MacDonald, RN, CON(C)

Donalda has been an oncology nurse for 50 years working in both inpatient and outpatient units. She has been a primary nurse in lung and GI oncology as well as worked in the chemotherapy suite. For the last 10 years of her clinical career, she has been the solo instructor for the Sinai C.A.R.E. Cancer Care education series that she and her chemo colleagues developed targeting nurses new to oncology. She has been an educator at de Souza for the past 15 years. Donalda has served on the board of directors for the Canadian Association of Nurses in Oncology for 7 years. Donalda holds certification in oncology from the CNA. She has done item writing and exam review for the CNA Oncology Certification Exam. Donalda was nominated by her oncology peers and was one of 100 nurses from across Canada to receive the CNA Centennial Award honoring her work in education of novice oncology nurses. In 2014 she received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Canadian Association of Nurses in Oncology. She was the recipient of the Pfizer Award of Excellence in Education in 2023.

Course Author and Co-Facilitator

Margaret Forbes, RN-EC, MN, NP-Adult, CON(C)

Margaret is a nurse practitioner with more than 30 years of oncology experience. She recently practiced as a nurse practitioner in complex malignant hematology including stem cell transplant and cellular therapies at the Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Centre. Margaret also has clinical experience in the treatment and management of people with solid tumour malignancies, specifically breast cancer. Margaret has held various nursing leadership roles most recently as a nurse practitioner lead in complex malignant hematology. She was the clinical lead in the development of the cancer survivorship program at the Juravinski Cancer Centre. In 2016, Margaret was the recipient of the Canadian Association of Nurses in Oncology (CANO-ACIO) Pfizer Award of Excellence in Nursing Leadership. In 2018, Margaret led the development of the Ron and Nancy Clark Nurse Practitioner Fellowship in Hematology at the Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Centre. Margaret has participated in research as both a co-principal investigator and co-investigator in multiple studies. Margaret is an assistant clinical professor at McMaster University School of Nursing. She has recently joined the de Souza Institute as an advanced practice nurse educator. Margaret believes that a strong foundation in oncology knowledge will inspire nurses and other health care providers to become confident, competent and enthusiastic about providing excellence in the care of people and their families who experience cancer.

I. VIRTUAL LIBRARY

de Souza Institute has a virtual library that can be accessed to those registered in this course or any other de Souza Institute continuing education program. This resource enables you to access over 1500 e-Journals, 200 e-books and 8 on-line databases such as CINAHL or Ovid-Medline. You can use the virtual library to access the required reading materials for your course. The virtual library can be accessed 24 hours a day at any location that has internet access using a login and password.

The direct link is <https://library.desouzainstitute.com/login>.

J. TECHNICAL SUPPORT

eLearning Centre Orientation

The eLearning Centre Orientation is designed to introduce you to online learning and to help you understand how to navigate through the de Souza Institute eLearning centre and courses. It is strongly recommended that you complete this orientation so that you will be able to successfully navigate de Souza's eLearning environment.

de Souza Institute Support

If you have questions about the content of a course please email your course facilitator.

If you need assistance accessing or navigating the eLearning Centre, please refer to the eLearning Orientation course. If you have questions or have any general technical difficulties please contact support@desouzainstitute.com.

K. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Click the links below to review de Souza's Policies.

[Academic Honesty and Copyright Policy](#)

[Cancellations, Incomplete and No Show Policy](#)

[Request for Accommodation Policy](#)

If you are experiencing difficulty completing this course in a timely way, please review the above policies and contact the course facilitator to help you make a plan to support your learning and course completion.