

Former NHL Player Kevin Dineen Diagnosed With Pancreatic Cancer

Former All-Star player and coach Dineen shared the news during Hockey Fights Cancer month and offered encouragement to others with cancer.

December 10, 2025 By Laura Schmidt

Former NHL player and coach Kevin Dineen, 62, recently shared he was diagnosed with [pancreatic cancer](#), The Associated Press (AP) [reports](#).

“This Thanksgiving feels a bit different,” Dineen wrote [via social media](#). “A few months ago, I was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. It has put a lot into perspective, most of all how lucky I am to be surrounded by so many supportive family and friends.”

This Thanksgiving feels a bit different. A few months ago, I was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. It has put a lot into perspective, most of all how lucky I am to be surrounded by so many supportive family and friends.

[#HockeyFightsCancer pic.twitter.com/IDnrUjI74T](#)

— Kevin Dineen (@kdino9) [November 30, 2025](#)

The two-time All-Star shared his [diagnosis](#) at the end of the NHL’s [Hockey Fights Cancer](#) month, an initiative highlighted every November that raises money and awareness for [cancer research](#).

A long, flat gland located behind the stomach, the pancreas releases enzymes that help digest

food. The vital organ also produces insulin and glucagon, hormones that help regulate blood sugar levels and metabolism.

Pancreatic cancer accounts for [only about 3%](#) of all cancers in the United States, but it is the fourth leading cause of cancer death in both women and men. Age is an important risk factor for pancreatic cancer, and rates increase after age 50.

About 67,440 people are diagnosed with pancreatic cancer and about 51,980 die of the malignancy annually, according to the [American Cancer Society](#).

Throughout his career, which spanned from 1984 to 2002, Dineen played for several NHL teams. He skated in over 1,200 regular-season and playoff games with the Hartford Whalers/Carolina Hurricanes, Philadelphia Flyers, Ottawa Senators and Columbus Blue Jackets.

He spent nearly half of his career with the Hartford Whalers and became a big fan favorite.

WTNH News 8, based in the Hartford-New Haven area, shared the news of Dineen's diagnosis on social media. [The post](#) has garnered over 700 reactions and 115 comments from Connecticut residents recalling fond memories of watching Dineen skate for the Hartford Whalers. Some people shared that they got to know Dineen at local establishments in Hartford after games.

"I wanted to share my news because hockey has taught me that no fight is faced alone," Dineen told the AP. "For anyone out there battling something heavy—whether it's cancer or another fight entirely—I want you to know you are not alone."

From 2021 to 2024, Dineen was the head coach of the Utica Comets in the American Hockey League. He previously served as the head coach for the Florida Panthers and assistant coach for the Chicago Blackhawks.

To read more, click [#Pancreatic Cancer](#) or go to Cancer Health's [Basics on Pancreatic Cancer](#). It reads in part:

What is pancreatic cancer?

Cancer develops when cells grow out of control. The most common kind of primary pancreatic

cancer, meaning it starts in the pancreas, is adenocarcinoma of the ductal epithelium. This accounts for about 80% of cancers of the pancreas.

What are the risk factors for pancreatic cancer?

About 25% of pancreatic cancers are related to tobacco smoking, with the risk rising with larger numbers of cigarettes and more years of smoking. About 15% of cases occur in people with a family history of pancreatic cancer. Obesity, certain genetic conditions, a history of chronic pancreatitis (inflammation of the pancreas) and heavy alcohol use (which can cause pancreatitis) also contribute to increased risk.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.

<http://beta.docker.celebhealth.com/article/former-nhl-player-kevin-dineen-diagnosed-pancreatic-cancer>