

"We give you a fighting chance!"

Cancer Awareness



Regular physical activity is associated with a reduced risk of certain cancers, including cancers of the breast and colon.

Healthy habits to lower your cancer risk

Certain types of cancer are more likely to strike certain types of people than others. For example, while men can be diagnosed with breast cancer, women are far more likely to develop the disease. But just because a person's risk of developing cancer is low, that does not make that person immune from the disease. As a result, it's important that men and women take steps to lower their cancer risk.

One of the more effective ways to lower your risk for cancer is to ensure your lifestyle choices are as healthy as possible. Choosing habits that benefit your short- and long-term health can reduce your risk for cancer and a host of additional ailments.

Maintain a healthy weight.

According to the American Cancer Society, men and women who are overweight or obese are at a greater risk of several types of cancer, including cancer of the esophagus, pancreas, colon and rectum, breast, kidney, and thyroid. The National Cancer Institute defines obesity as someone with a body mass index, or BMI, of

30 or above, while someone with a BMI between 25 and 29.9 is considered overweight. Maintaining a healthy weight or shedding excess weight if you are already at an elevated risk for cancer can lower your risk for cancer and other potentially debilitating diseases, including diabetes, high blood pressure and stroke.

Quit smoking.

Smokers might be surprised to learn that tobacco use, according to the ACS, is responsible for nearly 20 percent of all deaths in the United States. That might have something to do with tobacco's role in causing more than a dozen types of cancer and its link to heart disease, emphysema and stroke.

But smoking can even harm nonsmokers unfortunate enough to spend time in the vicinity of smokers. Such nonsmokers take in nicotine and thousands of additional chemicals, including carbon monoxide and cadmium, a chemical element used in batteries, when people smoke near them. In addition, a study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine* found that nonsmokers exposed to secondhand smoke were

25 percent more likely to have coronary heart disease compared to nonsmokers not exposed to smoke. Secondhand smoke is especially harmful to children, as kids whose parents smoke around them get bronchitis and pneumonia more often than kids whose parents abstain from smoking in their presence.

Exercise regularly.

The NCI notes that there is strong evidence that physical activity is associated with reduced risk of certain cancers, including cancers of the breast and colon. More than 60 studies published in North America, Europe, Asia, and Australia have indicated that physically active women have a lower risk of developing breast cancer than inactive women, with some active women reducing their risk by as much as 80 percent. Studies conducted around the world have produced similar findings with regard to colon cancer. Research has consistently indicated that adults who increase their physical activity, be it in intensity, duration or frequency, can reduce their risk of developing colon cancer by 30 to 40 percent relative to adults who are sedentary. The

ACS suggests adults include at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity exercise or 75 minutes of vigorous activity in their weekly routines, though many studies have found that 30 to 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity per day is the most effective way to reduce cancer risk significantly.

Reduce alcohol consumption.

While many adults may be quick to point out the benefits that a glass of wine can have with regard to a person's risk of heart disease or stroke, the National Toxicology Program of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as recently as 2011 listed the consumption of alcoholic beverages as a known human carcinogen. Alcohol consumption is a major risk factor for various types of cancers, including head and neck cancers, esophageal cancer, liver cancer, and breast cancer. Adults who continue to consume alcohol should do so in moderation, which the ACS defines as no more than two drinks per day for men and no more than one drink per day for women.

Patient Care Always Comes First

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