Healthy Living Newsletter

February 2015

Diet, exercise, smoking, and other lifestyle choices you make all impact your overall health and your risk for cancer. To help you stay well, the American Cancer Society offers the Healthy Living Newsletter, a monthly email with useful information on eating right, staying active, and other steps you can take to help reduce your cancer risk. | Español

6 Steps to Help Lower Your Cancer Risk

While cancer can be unpredictable, there are proactive steps everyone can take to help reduce their cancer risk and boost their odds of living a longer, healthier life.

Learn more

Recognizing Signs of Depression

Everyone feels sad sometimes. But when those feelings won’t go away or they interfere with daily life, you could be experiencing depression. Learn how to tell the difference — and what to do about it.
Staying Active at Work

Experts say sitting too much and getting too little exercise is bad for our health. But what can you do when you're stuck at your desk all day? Follow our tips to get up and get active while at work.

Eating Out Could Add 6 Pounds a Year

Americans eat an average 200 calories more when they dine out, and that can lead to weight gain. Check out our plan to help you enjoy eating out while successfully managing your healthy food goals.

Recipe: Blueberry-Peach-Pomegranate Smoothie

Pomegranates are high in vitamins and fiber, and fun to eat. Learn how to remove the edible seeds for a delicious snack — or use pomegranate juice in our Blueberry-Peach-Pomegranate Smoothie.
Healthy Living » 6 Steps to Help Lower Your Cancer Risk

6 Steps to Help Lower Your Cancer Risk

Cancer is often unpredictable, but there are things everyone can do to help reduce their cancer risk or improve their chances of beating the disease if they do get it. What’s more, some of those same behaviors can also help lower your risk for other serious diseases, and boost your odds of living a longer, healthier life.

1. Get regular cancer screening tests.
Regular screening tests can catch some cancers early, when they’re small, have not spread, and are easier to treat. With cervical and colon cancers, these tests can even prevent cancer from developing in the first place. Talk with your doctor about the tests for breast, cervical, colon, lung, and prostate cancers.

2. Get to and stay at a healthy weight.
Being overweight or obese is a risk factor for many cancers, including breast, colon, endometrium, kidney, esophagus, and pancreatic cancer. You can control your weight through regular exercise and healthy eating.

3. Exercise regularly.
Physical activity has been shown to lower the risk of several types of cancer, including breast, endometrium, prostate, and colon cancer. It also reduces the risk of other serious diseases such as diabetes and heart disease.

- Adults should get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity (equal to a brisk walk) or 75 minutes of vigorous activity (makes your heartbeat and breathing faster, and makes you sweat) each week, preferably spread throughout the week.
- Kids should get at least 1 hour of moderate- or vigorous-intensity activity each day, with vigorous activity at least 3 days each week.

4. Eat a healthy diet.
Studies show that eating a lot of different vegetables and fruits, whole grains, and fish or poultry is linked with a lower risk of developing certain cancers. On the other hand, eating more processed and red meat is linked with a higher risk of developing certain cancers. The American Cancer Society recommends:

- Eating at least 2½ cups of vegetables and fruits each day
- Eating less red meat (beef, pork, and lamb) and less processed meat (bacon, sausage, luncheon meats, and hot dogs)
- Choosing breads, pastas, and cereals made from whole grains instead of refined grains, and brown rice instead of white
- Eating fewer sweets

5. Avoid tobacco.
Tobacco use in the US is responsible for nearly 1 out of every 5 deaths — about 480,000 early deaths each year. About 80% of lung cancer deaths and 30% of all cancer deaths are caused by tobacco use.

If you don’t use tobacco products, don’t start. If you do, quit. For help, visit cancer.org/quitsmoking, or call the American Cancer Society at 1-800-227-2345.

Research has shown that alcohol can increase your risk for certain kinds of cancer, including breast, mouth, throat, voice box, esophagus, liver, colon and rectal cancer. The more alcohol you drink, the higher your risk.

• Men should have no more than 2 drinks a day and women no more than 1.

• One drink is equal to about 12 ounces of beer, 5 ounces of wine, or 1.5 ounces of 80-proof liquor.

Stay Up-to-date With Cancer News
Get the latest news and information about cancer from the American Cancer Society to help you stay well and get well.
Healthy Living » Recognizing Signs of Depression

Recognizing Signs of Depression

Longfellow wrote, "Into each life some rain must fall." And each of us has ways of coping with the sadness that's an inevitable part of life. But sadness that doesn't go away or that keeps you from enjoying things you usually like could be a sign of clinical depression.

One type of clinical depression, *seasonal affective disorder* (SAD), is more common around this time of year, when the days are shorter and the nights are longer. Treatment for SAD usually involves light
therapy and can also include talk therapy or prescription medicines.

Other kinds of clinical depression may be caused by a tragic event, a period of stress, an illness, changes in the brain that affect mood, or for reasons nobody understands. Getting help is important, because treatment, including medicines, counseling, or a combination of both, can reduce the suffering that comes along with depression and improve quality of life.

**What to look for**

- Ongoing sad or “empty” mood for most of the day
- Loss of interest or pleasure in almost all activities most of the time
- Major weight loss (when not dieting) or weight gain
- Being slowed down or restless and agitated almost every day, enough for others to notice
- Extreme tiredness (fatigue) or loss of energy
- Trouble sleeping – early waking, sleeping too much, or not being able to sleep
- Trouble focusing thoughts, remembering, or making decisions
- Feeling guilty, worthless, or helpless
- Frequent thoughts of death or suicide (not just fear of death), suicide plans, or attempts

If you suspect you may be depressed, make an appointment to see a doctor. If you notice symptoms in a friend or family member, talk with them about getting help. If someone tries to hurt themselves, or has a plan to do so, urge them to get help from their doctor or the emergency room, or call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

**Depression in Cancer Patients**

Help is available 24 hours a day from the American Cancer Society. [Read our online information about depression in people with cancer](#), or call us at 1-800-227-2345.
Staying Active at Work

Many of us have jobs that keep us sitting at our desks, getting up infrequently to move around. But study after study links inactivity with dying earlier from diseases like cancer, so it’s in our best interest to get some exercise — even while we’re at work.

American Cancer Society Director of Nutrition and Physical Activity Colleen Doyle, MS, RD, has some tips to keep you active during your work day.
• If you drive to work and park in a deck or garage, find a space at the far end so you have a walk to the elevator or stairs. If you take transit, get off one stop farther from your office and walk the extra distance. And, if you can, choose the escalator or stairs instead of the elevator.

• Stuck sitting at conference tables? Have a walking meeting. Frequently sending emails to people down the hall? Walk to someone’s office to deliver a message. And have you considered sending your print jobs to a printer far away? Or using the bathroom the farthest from your desk?

• At your desk, ditch your chair and sit on an exercise ball instead. During conference calls, stand up and pace, or stay seated and do leg lifts, knee lifts, and toe curls. If you’re feeling adventurous, keep a weight under your desk for bicep curls. If you have a wall, do standing push-ups.

Stay Healthy All Year Long
Receive lifestyle tips each month to stay well and help lower your cancer risk.
Sign up for the Healthy Living newsletter now.
Eating Out Could Add 6 Pounds a Year

A study of Americans’ dining habits finds that we eat out an average 2 days a week and when we do, we’re getting about 200 extra calories. This is true whether the restaurant is full-service or fast-food. And what’s worse — when we dine in restaurants instead of at home, we also eat more saturated fat, sugar, and sodium.

These findings are from a recent study led by American Cancer Society researchers. They analyzed...
surveys from 12,528 adults conducted from 2003 to 2010.

According to lead researcher Binh Nguyen, PhD, “If you eat out 2 days per week and do not exercise or reduce intake during the day, the additional caloric intake is about 20,000 calories per year, the equivalent of about 6 pounds annually.”

But you can eat out and still eat healthy, if you plan in advance and follow some simple strategies:

• Look up the restaurant’s menu online before you head out. Research the calorie counts of some menu items and decide in advance what you’ll order. Remember, items that may seem healthy, such as salads, can sometimes contain loads of fat and calories thanks to dressings or toppings.

• If you can’t find nutrition details in advance, be ready to recognize some selections likely to be lower in fat, such as clear, broth-based soups or plain lettuce or spinach salads with the dressing on the side. Look for entrée options that are grilled, broiled, or steamed instead of fried, or ask your waiter to recommend some lighter menu choices.

• If you decide to indulge in a special dish or can’t pass up that irresistible dessert, plan to share. It will help give you a taste of what you crave without overindulging.

Restaurant Eating Tips

Learn more about making smart food choices when dining out.
Healthy Living » Recipe: Blueberry-Peach-Pomegranate Smoothie

How to Eat a Pomegranate

Pomegranates are a beautiful red fruit with edible seeds. They’re high in vitamin C, potassium, and fiber, and they’re low in calories. Pomegranates are full of compounds called polyphenols, which are present in many different fruits and vegetables. These compounds are being studied to find out whether they can prevent chronic diseases including cancer and heart disease.

When shopping for pomegranates, choose a dark, heavy fruit. To get to the delicious seeds, called
arils, cut off the top of the fruit, then cut the pomegranate into sections. Place the sections into a bowl of water to avoid staining your fingers and to cushion the seeds. Then gently use your fingers to separate the arils from the fruit. Strain out the water, then enjoy. You can eat the arils by themselves, sprinkle into salads, add to pancakes or yogurt, or include in your favorite sweet recipe.

You can also buy bottled pomegranate juice at the grocery store, sometimes mixed with other flavors. Our smoothie recipe from *The Great American Eat-Right Cookbook*, available from the American Cancer Society bookstore, calls for pomegranate-blueberry juice.

**Recipe: Blueberry-Peach-Pomegranate Smoothie**

1 cup frozen blueberries  
1 cup non-fat vanilla yogurt  
1 cup pomegranate or pomegranate-blueberry juice  
½ cup frozen peaches

In a blender, combine blueberries, yogurt, juice, and peaches. Process until smooth.

Serves 2

**Per serving:**
Calories, 180  
Calories from Fat, 5  
Total Fat, 0.5 g  
Saturated Fat, 0.1 g  
Trans Fat, 0.0 g  
Polyunsaturated Fat, 0.3 g  
Monounsaturated Fat, 0.1 g  
Cholesterol, 5 mg  
Sodium, 70 mg  
Total Carbohydrate, 41 g  
Dietary Fiber, 3 g  
Sugars, 32 g  
Protein, 4 g