

Healthy Eating Tip of the Month
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Nutrition for the Cancer Survivor

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Top Recommendations for Cancer Prevention



MAINTAIN A HEALTHY WEIGHT

It is crucial to achieve and maintain a healthy weight to prevent cancer. Obesity is not only a risk factor for many other chronic diseases but is linked to 1/3 of cancers. When a person is obese, their body experiences a chronic state of inflammation which can lead to DNA damage. Fat tissue also produces excess hormones that may stimulate cell growth.

INCREASE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Physical activity helps to achieve a healthy weight and keep our hormones balanced. Aim to achieve 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity above your usual activities each day. Take the stairs more often and increase your walking pace. Long inactivity is also detrimental to the body. Take a break every hour and walk around for a few minutes.



AVOID SUGARY DRINKS AND ENERGY DENSE FOODS

Intake of energy dense foods leads to weight gain. Sugary drinks, including 100% fruit juices, are one of the primary sources of energy dense foods in the American diet. These drinks are easy to consume in large quantities without making us feel full. Try consuming more fruits and vegetables which are high in fiber and make us feel fuller for longer! For drinks, switch to unsweetened coffee, tea and water.



EAT A VARIETY OF FRUITS, VEGETABLES, WHOLE GRAINS, AND LEGUMES

Increasing plant based foods in our diets can lead to increased weight loss. These foods are also high in vitamins, minerals, fiber, and phytochemicals which help reduce cancer risk. USDA guidelines recommend filling 3/4 of your plate with fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Legumes like beans, chickpeas, and lentils are great plant based proteins.



LIMIT CONSUMPTION OF RED MEATS AND AVOID PROCESSED MEATS

Current research shows that intake of red meats (beef, lamb, pork) only begins to have a measurable increase on cancer risk after consumption of 18oz a week. Red meats tend to have a higher fat content however, so be sure to watch how these foods affect weight gain. Processed meats on the other hand should be avoided all together. These include ham, bacon, and sausage. The mechanism for this is not currently known, however it is theorized that chemicals used in processing contribute to the increased risk. Try substituting baked fish and poultry!

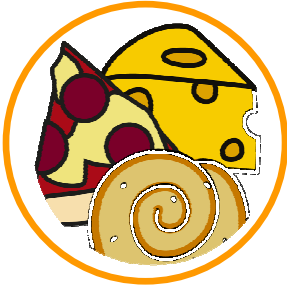


Avoid alcohol

Though alcohol has been in the spotlight for its modest cardiovascular benefits when consumed moderately, it is a potent carcinogen. Alcohol is also very energy dense which can lead to weight gain. If you choose to drink, limit your intake to 2 servings/day for men and 1 serving/day for women. A serving is a 12oz beer, 5oz wine, or 1.5oz hard alcohol.



LIMIT CONSUMPTION OF SALTY FOODS



Studies have shown an increase in stomach cancers with high salt intake due to damage to the stomach lining. Many packaged foods are preserved with sodium so be sure to read the labels for salt content. Generally, any serving with more than 400mg of sodium is considered “high”. Try flavoring foods with garlic powder or herb blends to avoid added salt.

GET MICRONUTRIENTS FROM DIETARY INTAKE

Research does not support taking supplements for the prevention of cancer. In fact, there is some evidence that specific supplements may actually increase risk of certain cancers. Instead focus on healthy eating to consume all the nutrients your body needs naturally.



NEW MOTHERS SHOULD PLAN TO BREASTFEED

Breastfeeding has tremendous benefits for both mother and baby. Breastfeeding helps to regulate and lower hormones for the mother. Breastfeeding also allows the body to remove damaged cells in the breast tissue. Babies who are breastfed are less likely to be overweight or obese which increases cancer risk.

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Reduce Sedentary Behaviors: Sit Less and Move More

Sedentary behaviors have drastic effects on our health, even if we are meeting the minimum physical activity guidelines. Scientists believe that sitting too much inhibits the body from being able to deposit fat from the blood stream into the body. Having an increased amount of fat in our blood increases our risk for cardiovascular disease. Sitting also reduced our insulin sensitivity which increases the risk for type 2 diabetes.

Get Active: Plan Ideas for Work

1. Take a walk break every time you take a coffee or tea break.
2. Do some leisurely walking with colleagues after you eat lunch together .
3. Stand up and move whenever you have a drink of water.
4. Whenever possible stand up as opposed to sitting down.
5. Stand up and talk on business phone conversations.
6. Stop at the park on your way home from work and take a walk.
7. Walk to a co-worker's desk instead of emailing or calling her/him.
8. Walk briskly when headed to meetings.
9. Take the stairs whenever you can.
10. Take the long route to the restroom.
11. Schedule walking meetings with colleagues.
12. Schedule short breaks into your electronic calendar as reminders to move.
13. Every 45 min-1 hour, do some squats, lunges, upper body stretches, shoulder rolls.

Get Active: Plan Ideas for Daily Life

1. Take a family walk after dinner.
2. Get a pedometer and start tracking your steps. Progress up to 10,000 steps or more a day.
3. Walk your dog daily.
4. Replace those Sunday drives with Sunday walks.
5. When watching TV, stand up and move with every commercial break.
6. Walk up and down escalators instead of just riding them.
7. Walk fast when doing errands.
8. Pace the sidelines at your kids' athletic games.
9. Walk up and down the shopping aisles at the store before you shop.
10. Pick up a new active hobby, such as cycling or hiking.
11. After reading six pages of a book, get up and move a little.
12. Try standing and moving whenever you are talking on a cell phone.
13. Play with your kids 15-30 minutes a day.
14. Dance to your favorite inspiring music selections.
15. Walk briskly in the mall.

Cancer Fighting Foods

Cruciferous Vegetables

Cruciferous vegetables provide many nutrients which are both part of a healthy diet and have been shown to have some type of cancer fighting ability. Cruciferous vegetables like broccoli, cauliflower, kale, brussels sprouts, and bok choy contain vitamins C, E, and K, as well as folate, fiber, and carotenoids.

Vitamin C and E are antioxidants which work to protect our cells from damage. Fiber has been shown to decrease cancer risk. The mechanism for this is not completely understood and varies depending on the cancer. However, we do know that high fiber intake helps to reduce weight.

Cruciferous vegetables also contain glucosinolates. When glucosinolates are broken down into their subparts they have cancer protective affects. These subparts are known as indoles. They work to prevent cancer by protecting the cells DNA and cause cancer cell death. They also help to prevent inflammation in the cells which is a risk factor for cancer.

Overall, cruciferous vegetables are part of a healthy diet. Diets that are rich in Cruciferous vegetables have shown an overall decreased risk in cancer.



Winter Squash

Winter squash are packed with antioxidants and carotenoids. Carotenoids, like beta-carotene, can be converted to vitamin A in our bodies. Vitamin A helps support our immune systems. They are also rich in vitamin C and fiber. Fiber helps reduce cancer risk in a number of ways, but primarily controls weight gain. Excess weight is a risk factor for cancer.



Berries

Berries such as blueberries and cranberries are packed with phytochemicals acting as antioxidants. Many of these phytochemicals have been shown to decrease growth and increase self destruction in cancer cells in some cancers. They are also a rich source of vitamin C and fiber.



Garlic

Garlic has been shown to have preventative affects. The allium vegetable has shown decreased risk of various cancers in multiple prospective studies. This decreased risk is thought to stem from garlic's antibacterial properties as well as its ability to enhance DNA repair and slow cell growth





Recipes

Broccoli Lemon and Garlic Penne

Servings: 4

- 1/2 pound penne pasta
- 5 cups broccoli florets or 1 (12oz) bag broccoli florets
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 10 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup reduced-sodium chicken broth
- Grated zest of 1 lemon
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1/4 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Calories: 395

Protein: 13g

Fiber: 5g

Directions

1. Prepare penne according to package directions for al dente (just firm). Two to three minutes before penne is ready, add broccoli. Finish cooking, drain, and set aside.
2. Meanwhile, in a large skillet over medium-high heat, add oil. Sauté the garlic for 1 to 2 minutes, or until aromatic and beginning to color.
3. Add broth and bring to a boil for 3 to 5 minutes, or until reduced by half, stirring frequently. Add pasta, broccoli, and lemon zest and cook until coated with sauce. Season generously with salt and pepper. Transfer to serving bowl and top with cheese

*Broccoli is a great source of vitamin C, fiber, calcium, and iron

*recipe from www.cancer.org

Roasted Balsamic Cauliflower

Servings: 5

- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 2 tbsp. balsamic vinegar
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 3 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 head cauliflower, chopped to bite sized pieces

Calories: 86

Protein: 3g

Fiber: 3g

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 425F. Line baking tray with foil
2. Stir olive oil, balsamic vinegar, salt, and garlic together in a bowl. Add the cauliflower and toss to coat. Spread evenly onto baking tray
3. Stirring occasionally, bake in preheated oven until tender, about 20 minutes.

*Cauliflower is a rich source of vitamin C, fiber, calcium, and potassium

*recipe from www.allrecipes.com

Butternut Squash Soup

Servings: 6

- 6 tbsp. chopped onion
- 4 tbsp. butter
- 6 cups peeled and cubed butternut squash
- 3 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- 1/8 tsp cayenne pepper
- 1 (8oz) package cream cheese

Directions

1. In a large saucepan, saute onions in margarine until tender. Add squash, chicken broth, and spices. Bring to a boil and cook for 20 minutes or until squash is tender.
2. Puree squash and cream cheese in a blender or food processor in batches until smooth. Return to saucepan and heat through. Do not boil.

Calories: 283

Protein: 6g

Fiber: 3g

*edited recipe from www.allrecipes.com

Frozen Berry Smoothie

Servings: 1

- 1 cup 2% milk
- 1 cup frozen berries
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

Directions

1. Combine milk, berries, and vanilla in blender. Blend until smooth.

Calories: ~200

Protein: 9g

Fiber: 7g

*edited recipe from www.allrecipes.com

References

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- [Broccoli, Garlic, Penne Recipe](#)—cancer.org
- [Roasted Balsamic Cauliflower Recipe](#)—Allrecipes
- [Butternut Squash Soup Recipe](#)—Allrecipes