



Exercise More to Cut Your Cancer Risk

Few words in the English language generate as much fear and anxiety as “cancer.” It is a disease we all desperately want to avoid.

The good news is that there are proven ways to reduce your risk of cancer. Exercise is one of the best.

Lowers the risk of at least 13 cancers

Research shows that regular exercise of a “moderate to vigorous intensity” lowers the risk of at least 13 different cancers, including breast, colon, lung, endometrial, liver, stomach, kidney, esophageal, and bladder. It also reduces the risk of myeloid leukemia, as well as cancers of the head and neck.

It is believed that exercise lowers the risk of cancer by controlling weight, reducing sex hormones, decreasing inflammation, and boosting the immune system. Physical activity can also improve quality of life and help to improve outcomes during cancer treatment.

You don’t have to run marathons

The more exercise you do, the better in terms of cancer prevention, but you don’t have to work out like you’re training for a marathon. In general, aim for at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise—or 75 minutes of vigorous exercise—each week.

This could be as simple as taking a 30-minute walk five days a week. Adding in some strength training is beneficial, too. Don’t take an all-or-nothing approach. What’s most important is that you’re physically active on a consistent basis.

Do all you can to prevent cancer

Exercise is just one way to lower your cancer risk. Nutrition is also important, as are regular cancer screenings.

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Get Screened for Cancer

Another important step for cancer prevention is getting recommended screenings. They can help you and your physician identify signs of cancer early when it is more treatable.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) supports screenings for breast, cervical, colorectal (colon), and lung cancers. Which of these screenings you should get depends on your sex, age, family history, and other factors.

Breast cancer screenings

Women with an average risk of breast cancer are recommended to get a mammogram every two years between the ages of 50 and 74. Women with a family history of breast cancer should talk with their physician about when to start mammograms—and how often to get them.

Cervical cancer screenings

Two tests help screen for cervical cancer:

- The Pap test looks for precancerous cells in the cervix.
- The HPV test identifies the human papillomavirus that can lead to these cell changes.

Women should get a Pap test starting at age 21. If it's normal, their physician may advise them to wait three years until their next one. HPV tests should start at age 30. If that test is normal, women may be able to wait three years until their next test.

Colorectal cancer screenings

Most people should start getting screened for colorectal cancer after they turn 45. Screening options include stool tests, flexible sigmoidoscopy, colonoscopy, and CT colonography (virtual colonoscopy). Those with certain bowel diseases and/or family history may need to start screenings at a younger age.

Lung cancer screenings

Current or former heavy smokers (those who quit in the last 15 years) between the ages of 50 and 80 should get annual lung cancer screenings. This is done with low-dose computed tomography (LDCT).

Talk to your doctor

If you are not sure which screenings you should get, talk to your doctor. Together, you can go over your family history, lifestyle, and other factors to decide which screenings are right for you.



Eat Well to Avoid Cancer

Studies show that among all cancer-related deaths, as many as 30-35% are linked to diet. Part of the increased cancer risk is due to the food itself, and part is due to increased body weight from an unhealthy diet.

To reduce your risk of cancer, the World Cancer Research Fund (WCRF) and the American Institute of Cancer Research (AICR) recommend you:

- **Eat a diet rich in whole grains, vegetables, fruit, and beans.** These foods should make up the majority of your daily diet.
- **Limit red meat and processed meat.** Consume just moderate amounts of beef, pork (yes, pork is scientifically a red meat!), and lamb. Try to avoid processed meat—such as bacon, hot dogs, and deli meat—entirely.
- **Limit sugar-sweetened drinks and alcohol consumption.** Instead, drink mostly water and unsweetened drinks.
- **Eat little to no heavily processed food (including fast food).** Also known as ultra-processed foods, these foods have unhealthy added ingredients like fat, salt, starch, sugar, artificial colors and flavors, and preservatives.

A good diet prevents other illnesses

Eating a healthy diet won't only help to protect you from cancer. It can also help to prevent diabetes, heart disease, and other illnesses. You'll likely feel better overall—both physically and mentally.

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1. <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/cancer/preventing-cancer/>
2. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2515569/>
3. <https://www.webmd.com/diet/ss/slideshow-processed-food>

CREAMY BROCCOLI APPLE SALAD

Ingredients

- 4 cups broccoli florets
- 1/2 cup carrots, shredded
- 1/2 red onion, sliced thin
- 2 apples, diced
- 1/2 cup pecans, chopped
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries
- 1 cup plain Greek yogurt
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon honey
- Salt and pepper, to taste

Instructions

1. In large bowl, combine broccoli, carrots, onion, apples, pecans and cranberries.
2. In separate bowl, whisk together yogurt, lemon juice and honey.
3. Combine yogurt mixture with vegetable mixture and toss well. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
4. Chill until ready to serve.

Servings

8



Nutrition Facts

Calories	140
Total Fat	6g
Sodium	25mg
Carbohydrate	20g
Total Sugars	15g
Dietary Fiber	3g
Protein	5g



Walk to prevent cancer

Take a 15-30-minute walk five days a week.

Employer Completion Form

☐

I successfully completed the Weekly to Prevent Cancer Activity by:

Signed: _____ Date: _____



Your Wellbeing Activity

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Take a walk

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