



July is Health Promoting Lifestyles for Cancer Prevention Month



What Is Health Promoting Lifestyles for Cancer Prevention?

Cancer is the second leading cause of death among Americans. One way to decrease your risk of developing cancer is adopting a healthy lifestyle. Researchers believe keeping a healthy lifestyle may prevent many cancers. A healthy lifestyle includes maintaining a healthy weight, staying physically active, managing stress, avoiding heavy or excess alcohol, and not smoking. Avoiding exposure to cancer-causing agents (such as certain chemicals, lead and asbestos) and sun exposure that results in sunburns can also help prevent cancer.

What Are the Key Statistics About Cancer?

- Cancer is the second leading cause of death in the United States (after heart disease) and it is estimated that there will be 571,950 deaths in 2011.
- Over a lifetime, about 1 in 2 men and 1 in 3 women in the United States will develop cancer.
- Cancer rates and deaths have been on the decline since the early 1990's.

Who's At Risk?

While everyone is at risk for cancer, some people are at greater risk than others. Age is the greatest risk factor for cancer, since nearly 80% of cancers are detected at age 55 and older. Also, people who use tobacco, drink heavily, are physically inactive, eat a poor diet, are regularly exposed to carcinogens (cancer causing agents) in their occupation, or have prolonged and unprotected exposure to sunlight are all at increased risk for certain cancers. Among racial/ethnic groups:

- African Americans are more likely to develop and die from cancer.
- Hispanics, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islanders have higher rates of cancers associated with infection such as uterine cervix, liver, and stomach.
- American Indians and Alaska Natives have a higher incidence and mortality rates from kidney cancer.

How Do I Reduce My Risk To Cancer?

There are lifestyle changes you can make that may reduce your risk of developing cancer. These include:

- Stop the use of tobacco products such as cigarettes, chewing tobacco or pan.
- Avoid excessive alcohol consumption.
- Increase physical activity.
- Maintain recommended weight.
- Consume 5 – 9 servings per day of fruits and vegetables.
- Engage in early detection and screening programs.
- Ask your healthcare provider about how you can get involved in cancer prevention trials.

Diet and Health Guidelines for Cancer Prevention

Diet Guidelines

Healthy eating is an important part of preventing cancer. The American Cancer Society recommends the following as part of a healthy diet:

- **Eat a variety of healthful foods, with an emphasis on plant sources.**
 - Plant sources are grains, fruit vegetables, soy, and other non-meat foods.
- **Eat five to nine servings of a variety of vegetables and fruits each day.**
 - Include vegetables and fruits at every meal and for snacks.
 - Eat a variety of vegetables and fruits.
 - Limit french fries, snack chips, and other fried vegetable products.
 - Choose 100% juice if you drink fruit or vegetable juices, but limit intake.
- **Choose whole grains in preference to processed (refined) grains and sugars.**
 - Choose whole grain rice, bread, pasta, and cereals.
 - Limit consumption of refined carbohydrates, including pastries, sweetened cereals, soft drinks, and sugars.
- **Limit consumption of red meats, especially those processed and high in fat.**
 - Choose fish, poultry, or beans as an alternative to beef, pork, and lamb.
 - When you eat meat, select lean cuts and smaller portions.
 - Prepare meat by baking, broiling, or poaching, rather than by frying or charbroiling.
- **Choose foods that help maintain a healthful weight.**
 - When you eat away from home, choose food low in fat, calories, and sugar and avoid large portions.
 - Eat smaller portions of high-calorie foods. Be aware that “low fat” or “fat free” does not mean “low calorie” and those low-fat cakes, cookies, and similar foods are often high in calories due to high sugar content.
 - Substitute vegetables, fruits, and other low-calorie foods for calorie-dense foods such as French fries, cheeseburgers, pizza, ice cream, doughnuts, and other sweets.

Health Guidelines

Smoking

Studies show that tobacco products in any form (for example cigarettes and chewing tobacco) are a major cause of lung and head and neck cancer. The earlier you start using tobacco, the greater your risk for

developing cancer and other health problems. Avoiding tobacco and quitting smoking are the two major steps that can be taken to prevent any cancer.

Sun Facts

The sun is needed for its light and warmth, but the sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation can cause damage to your skin and eyes. This damage leads to premature aging of the skin and is the greatest risk factor for developing skin cancer. The damaging effects of UV radiation are present even when it's cloudy or overcast.

Sun exposure that is intense enough to cause sunburn clearly increases a person's risk of developing skin cancer. Even UV exposure that does not cause sunburn can increase skin cancer risk.

Protection from the Damaging Rays of the Sun

Limiting exposure to the damaging UV radiation of the sun is the best way to prevent skin cancer.

- Try and avoid the sun between 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.
- Wear protective clothing -- cover up with a wide-brimmed hat, long-sleeved shirts and pants to ensure the sun won't penetrate.
- Use sunscreen. The American Cancer Society recommends that you use a sunscreen with a sun protective factor (SPF) of 15 or higher. Apply the sunscreen to any part of the body that is not protected by clothing. It is important to remember that the sunscreen must be reapplied throughout the day in order to be effective.
- Beware of cloudy days. You can get burned just as easily on a cloudy day as a sunny day.
- Do not use sunlamps or tanning salons.

Stay Physically Active

According to the American Cancer Society, adults should engage in moderate-intensity physical activities for at least 30 minutes on 5 or more days of the week.

Benefits of Regular Exercise

- Reduces risk of heart disease
- Increases good cholesterol (High-Density Lipoprotein – HDL)
- Lowers blood pressure
- Reduces the risk of diabetes
- Reduces the risk of colon, prostate and breast cancers
- Helps maintain weight
- Controls appetite
- Improves muscle tone and strength
- Improves balance
- Relieves insomnia
- Relieves anxiety and stress
- Prevents/treats depression
- Boosts self-image

Examples of Healthy Exercise

You don't have to go to a gym to get the benefits from regular exercise. The following are examples of healthy exercise that can be done at or near home, for little or no cost:

- Walking
- Bicycle Riding
- Stretching
- Jogging
- Hiking
- Gardening
- Housecleaning
- Dancing
- Racquet Sports
- Resistance exercises

Steps to Start Living a More Active Life

Here are some tips if you'd like to start living a more active life today:

1. Obtain medical clearance from your doctor if you are:
 - Male and 45 years old and older
 - Female and 55 years and older
2. Build exercise into your day - every little bit makes a difference:
 - Make exercise convenient
 - Take the stairs instead of the elevator
 - Walk short distances instead of driving
 - Park a little farther from store entrances and walk
 - Make exercise fun
 - Do activities that you find enjoyable
 - Get an exercise partner
 - Find indoor options when weather is too cold or hot
 - Mall walking
 - Aerobic exercise videos
 - Stationary bike
 - Treadmill
 - Dancing
 - Remember to start off slowly and set realistic goals!

Cancer Prevention Trials at The Cancer Institute of New Jersey (CINJ)

Prevention trials are research studies designed to answer important questions about the early detection and prevention of cancer. People who have certain health conditions may be able to participate in some of these trials. By finding and getting rid of abnormal cells, we may be able to prevent cancer. You can be part of our program to prevent cancer by participating in one of these trials. Participation in research studies *can* cure cancer!

If you are interested in participating in a cancer prevention trial, you can call The Cancer Institute of New Jersey at 732-235-8675. Follow the prompts to leave a message if the operators are busy. For additional information about nationwide cancer prevention trials, you can call the National Cancer Institute at 1-800-4 CANCER or visit their Web site at www.cancer.gov.

Where Can I Find Further Information?

The Resource and Learning Center
732-235-9639
www.cinj.org/rlc

National Cancer Institute
1-800-4-CANCER
www.cancer.gov

The American Cancer Society
1-800-ACS-2345
www.cancer.org

American Institute for Cancer Research
1-800-843-8114
www.aicr.org

National Institute of Health
301-496-4000
www.nih.gov

U.S. Preventative Services Task Force
www.ahcpr.gov/clinic/uspstfix.htm

Department of Health and Human Services: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
<http://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/index.htm>