

# TOP 10 Cancer prevention strategies



Remember these cancer-reducing tips and share them with family and friends. Lowering your risk of cancer can be one of the keys to a longer, healthier life for you and those you love.



## 1 Quit tobacco

Tobacco use is the biggest risk factor for cancer – and not just lung cancer. Cigarette smoking and tobacco use is linked to other cancers, including bladder, cervical, mouth, esophagus, throat, kidney, pancreatic and stomach cancer. In addition to cancer, tobacco can also cause or increase your risk for heart disease, stroke, diabetes, lung diseases, such as COPD, cataracts and immune system diseases, including rheumatoid arthritis. Exposure to secondhand smoke also increases your risk for lung cancer and a number of other adverse health conditions, so avoid exposure to it as well. If you use tobacco, set a goal to quit and use resources available to help you succeed.



## 2 Put a limit on alcohol

Drinking alcohol is linked to a greater risk of mouth, throat, voice box, esophageal, liver, breast and probably colorectal cancer. If you choose to drink alcohol, limit yourself to no more than two drinks per day (for men) and one drink per day (for women). One drink is 12 ounces of beer, 5 ounces of wine, or 1.5 ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits. Research shows that the risk for cancer increases with greater amounts of alcohol and even more so when a person drinks on a regular basis over time.



## 3 Avoid chemical exposure

Chemicals found in the environment, including some workplaces and certain hobbies, can raise your risk for many types of cancer, including kidney and bladder. Some chemicals known to cause cancer are present in smoke, pesticides, dust, fumes and other substances. Talk to your employer and your local health department about ways to limit your chemical exposure.



## 4 Get immunized

Some viral and bacterial infections are associated with cancer. For example, the human papillomavirus (HPV) raises the risk for cancers of the reproductive system. Chronic Hepatitis B infections are linked to liver cancer. Vaccines are available for HPV and Hepatitis B. The HPV vaccine is recommended for preteens, teens and certain young adults. Discuss vaccinations with your health care provider.

over »



## 5 Be sun smart

The most common form of cancer in the U.S. is skin cancer, striking about 1 million Americans each year. Prevention includes avoiding mid-day sun, dressing appropriately (tightly woven fabrics, long sleeves, long pants, a hat and sunglasses) and applying sunscreen (UVA and UVB protection, plus an SPF rating of at least 15). Also, don't use lamps and tanning beds.



## 6 Avoid risky sexual behaviors

Risky sexual behaviors, such as having sex with multiple partners and/or unprotected sex between non-exclusive partners, may lead to sexually transmitted diseases and/or other serious infections, including HPV, HIV and AIDS. HPV is associated with cervical cancer, but may also increase the risk of other forms of cancer in the reproductive organs. Persons with HIV and AIDS have a higher risk for certain cancers (liver, lung and anus). Always use a latex or polyurethane condom.

Sharing needles is another risky behavior that can lead to HIV, Hepatitis B, and Hepatitis C. Hepatitis raises the risk for liver cancer. Do not use another person's needles.



## 7 Get screened

Talk to your health care provider about screening recommendations. Knowing your personal and family health history can help your provider determine a cancer-screening plan that is best for you. Early detection through screenings can save your life.



## 8 Be physically active

Studies show physical activity helps to maintain a healthy weight and it may lower the risk for breast and colon cancer as well. The American Cancer Society recommends at least 150 minutes of moderate intense physical activity/week – preferably split between several days for cancer prevention.



## 9 Remember radon

Radon, the second-leading cause of lung cancer, occurs naturally, as radioactive elements in rocks and soil gradually break down. It can be found in buildings, some water supplies and underground mines. For more information, visit the EPA website.



## 10 Eat healthy and maintain a healthy weight

Consider an eating plan similar to the Mediterranean diet – a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts and extra-virgin olive oil. If you choose to drink alcohol, do so only in moderation. Limit your intake of processed meats and avoid charbroiling. Being overweight is linked with an increased risk for cancer of the breast, prostate, lung, colon, kidney and possibly other cancers. To keep your weight in check, choose nutrient-dense foods and limit your intake of refined sugars and high-fat foods.