

Nutrition for Cancer Survivors

Nutrition is an important part of cancer treatment and recovery. The American Cancer Society's Guidelines on Nutrition and Physical Activity for Cancer Prevention offer advice on healthy choices to prevent cancer in **all** individuals, including cancer survivors.

Based on scientific evidence, these guidelines conclude that a person's lifetime risk of developing or dying from cancer can be lowered by:

- Eating a healthy diet, with a focus on plant foods
- Limiting alcohol consumption
- Achieving and maintaining a healthy weight
- Being physically active

Body Weight and Cancer Risk

Being overweight or obese is linked to a higher risk of many types of cancer: breast cancer (among women who have gone through menopause); colon cancer; endometrial (uterine) cancer; esophageal cancer; and kidney cancer.

Obesity also likely raises the risk of cervical cancer; Hodgkin lymphoma; cancer of the gallbladder; multiple myeloma; pancreatic cancer; thyroid cancer; and aggressive forms of prostate cancer.

Healthy Food and Activity Choices to Reduce the Risk of Cancer

- Eat at least 2½ cups of vegetables and fruits each day.
- Enjoy a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables. The colors in fruits and vegetables come from phytochemicals, which are substances that can help protect you from cancer and other diseases.
- Eat three or more servings per day of high-fiber whole grain foods (such as bread, cereal, or pasta made from whole grains; brown rice).
- Choose nonfat or low-fat dairy products, such as fat-free or low-fat milk, low-fat cheese, and low-fat yogurt.
- Limit processed meats, such as bacon, sausage, lunch meats, and hot dogs.
- Choose poultry, fish, or beans instead of red meat (beef, pork, veal, and lamb). If you choose to eat red meat, select lean cuts and eat small portions (3 ounces or less).
- Use low-fat cooking methods, like broiling, baking, or steaming, instead of frying or charbroiling.
- If you drink alcoholic beverages, limit yourself to no more than one drink per day for women and two drinks per day for men. One drink equals 12 ounces of beer, 5 ounces of wine, or 1½ ounces of liquor.
- Balance the calories you eat with your physical activity to achieve and maintain a healthy weight. If you need help setting calorie goals or losing weight, talk with your health care team.
- Avoid excessive weight gain throughout life.
- Get at least 150 minutes (2½ hours) of moderately intense physical activity per week. That's about 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week. You can break up a day's goal into a few minutes here, a few minutes there if you need to. Talk with your health care team about the types of activities that are best for you.

For More Information

To learn more about healthy choices to prevent cancer, talk to your registered dietitian (RD) and find more information on these Web sites:

- American Cancer Society (www.cancer.org)
- American Institute for Cancer Research (www.aicr.org)
- MyPlate (www.ChooseMyPlate.gov)