



Cancer Prevention & Self-Care

GOALS

Participants will understand the importance of self-care and healthy choices. They will also be able to identify cancer risk factors and ways to help prevent cancer.

OBJECTIVES

At the end of this section, each participant will be able to:

UNDERSTAND the importance of self-care and healthy choices

DISCUSS healthy choices that decrease cancer risk

IDENTIFY ways to prevent specific cancers

IDENTIFY local resources relevant to cancer prevention

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Acknowledgements



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Thank you to the many people who read, edited and revised this material to develop a meaningful cancer education resource.

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Cancer Prevention & Self-Care

Cancer Risk Factors & Prevention

What small, healthy choices can you make?

Remember: Starting small can lead to big changes!

Cancer Risk Factors & Prevention



Throughout this section we will learn about healthy choices that can help prevent cancer. While you learn about these healthy choices, we encourage you to think about small, healthy changes that you can make and write them down.

The ABCs of Healthy Choices

It's simple, just think back to your ABCs:

A = Add What healthy activity can I **add** at this time?

B = Better What **better** choice could I make?

C = Change What could I **change** to make myself healthier?
What do I want or need to do to act on it?

Remember: Starting small can lead to big changes!



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Cancer Risk Factors & Prevention

A risk factor is anything that increases a person's chance of developing a disease.

There are 8 healthy choices you can make to reduce your risk of developing cancer.

Talk with your friends and family about the importance of healthy choices!

Cancer Risk Factors & Prevention

This section will discuss ways to live a happy and healthy life while decreasing cancer risk. A **risk factor** is anything that increases a person's chance of developing a disease.

This section will highlight 8 healthy choices people can make to reduce their risk of developing cancer. These healthy choices may prevent 2 out of 3 cancers.

1. **Eat 2 to 2½ cups of fruits and vegetables every day. Eat foods low in fat.** (page 7)
2. **Keep physically active.** (page 10)
3. **Maintain a healthy body weight.** (page 12)
4. **Choose not to have the habit of smoking or chewing tobacco. Avoid exposure to secondhand smoke.** (page 13)
5. **Decrease alcohol intake or do not drink alcohol.** (page 17)
6. **Protect your skin from the sun's harmful rays by using sunscreen or wearing protective clothing.** (page 19)
7. **Protect against HPV (Human Papilloma Virus).** (page 20)
8. **Have recommended cancer screening exams.** (page 22)

Talking with family and friends about healthy choices is important. Support each other in living healthy and happy lives!

Ask yourself.

What is one healthy thing I do to take care of myself? Write it down and tell a friend.

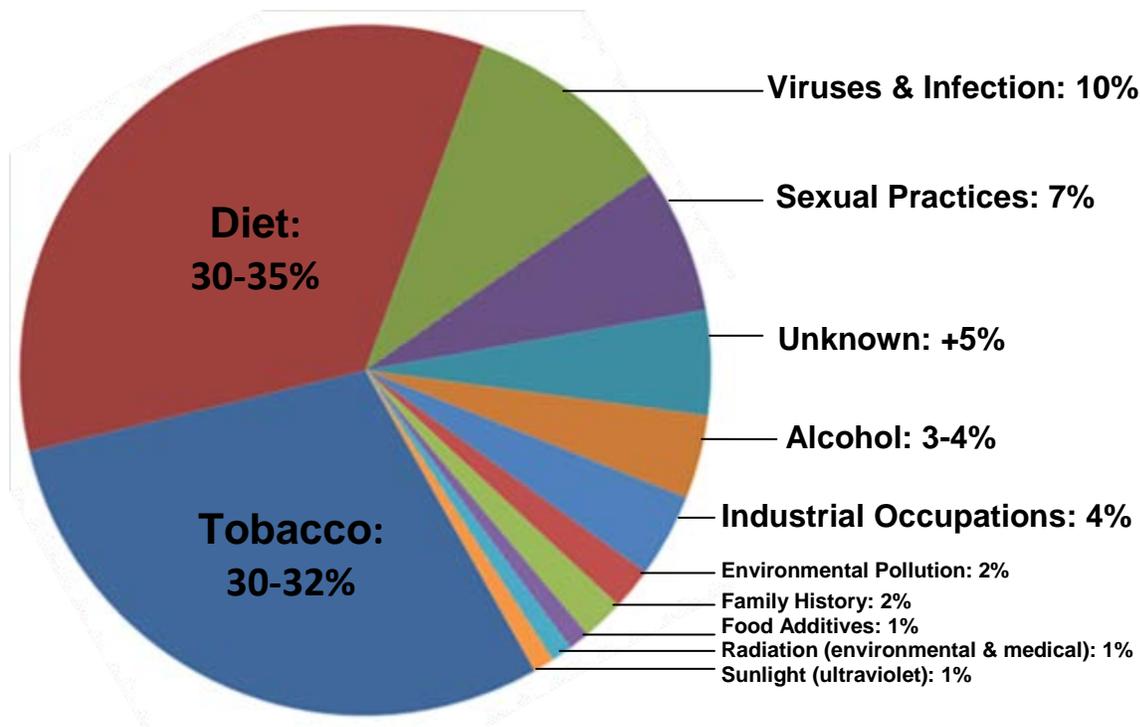


Healthy Choices

The choices we make, what we do and how we live affect our health, well-being and cancer risk. We CAN control most of our cancer risk. Our behaviors can affect the number of risk factors that we are exposed to.

National Cancer Risk Factors with Percentages

Adapted from Everyone's Guide to Cancer Therapy



Healthy choices make a difference: diet and tobacco are related to 60-67% of all cancers!

If you are interested in more information about what causes cancer, please see "Section 1: Cancer Basics."

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Self-Care

Do at least one healthy activity a day!

When we take better care of ourselves, it makes it easier for us to take better care of other people.

Self-Care

Self-care means looking after yourself in a healthy way.

When we take better care of ourselves, it makes it easier for us to take better care of other people.

Identify healthy activities that make you feel good and then do more of them every day.

Ask yourself

What healthy activities do I enjoy? Write it down and tell a friend.



Before you go to bed tonight, pat yourself on the back! It is great to know that you have done something healthy for yourself.

S.W.E.E.T. Dreams

S - Sleep

W - Water

E - Eat healthy

E - Exercise (Physical Activity)

T - Think positive thoughts



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Nutrition

Many types of cancer may be prevented by eating a healthy diet and maintaining a healthy weight.

Nutrition is related to 1/3 of all cancers.

Eating well can help you prevent cancer, as well as heart disease, stroke and diabetes.

Nutrition

Today, we continue to learn more about the connection between good nutrition and good health.

Between 30% - 35% of cancer risk is related to an unhealthy diet.

You can reduce your risk of many types of cancer by eating a healthy diet and maintaining a healthy weight.

The following Dietary Guidelines issued by the U.S. Departments of Agriculture, and Health and Human Services are recommended to reduce cancer, as well as heart disease, stroke and diabetes:

- Eat 2 to 2 ½ cups of fruits and vegetables every day. Fruits and vegetables can be fresh, frozen, dried or canned.
- Choose a diet with plenty of whole grain products, vegetables, fruits, berries and greens.
- Choose a diet low in fats. Try skim milk instead of whole milk.
- Choose a diet low in sugars. 4 g of sugar = 1 teaspoon of sugar. Drink water instead of soda pop.
- Choose a diet moderate in salt, less than 2000 mg or 2 g daily. Select canned foods labeled “low sodium,” “reduced sodium” or “no salt added.” Almost all frozen veggies are low in sodium.
- Steam, roast or bake foods instead of frying.
- Trim fat off meat before cooking.



Think about the MyPlate picture when you plate-out your meals.

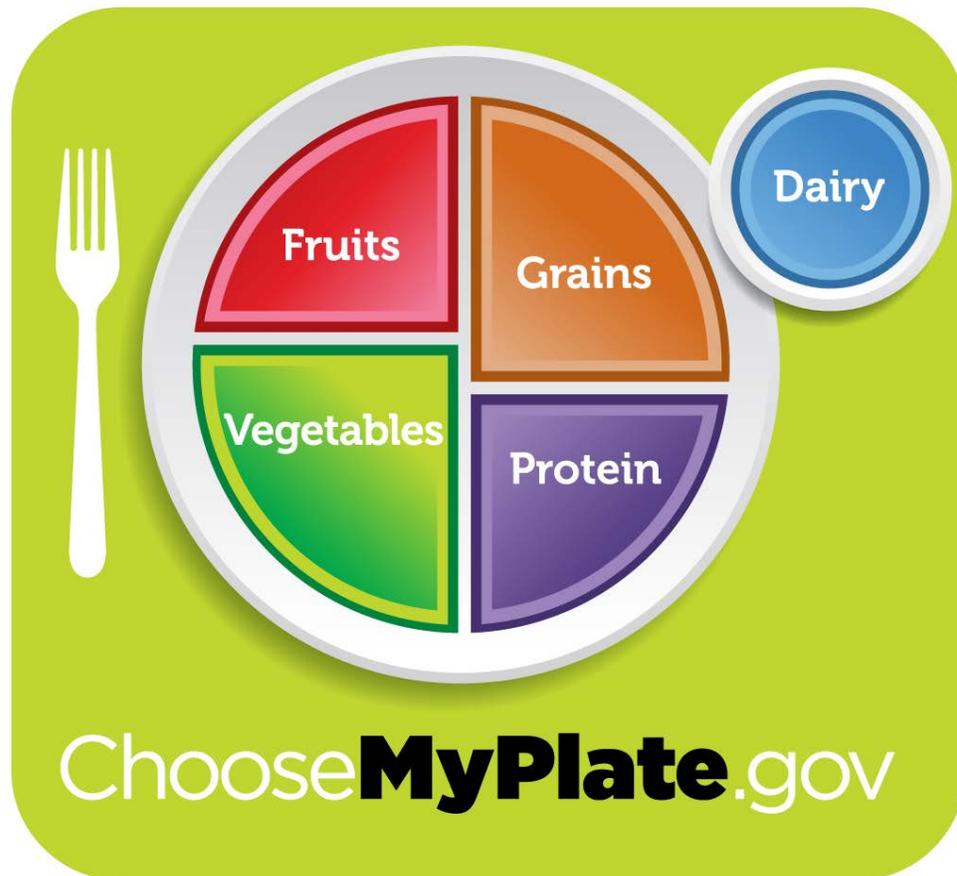
Make sure half of your plate is fruits and vegetables!

Before you eat, think about what and how much food goes on your plate.

MyPlate

MyPlate is a copyright of the U.S. Department of Agriculture

MyPlate is a guide to help you with healthy food choices and ensure a well-balanced meal. It provides a simple picture of how to plate-out foods for more balanced meals.



Before you eat, think about what and how much food goes on your plate. Throughout the day, include foods from all food groups: vegetables, fruits, whole grains, low-fat dairy products and lean protein foods.

- Make half your plate fruits and vegetables
- Make sure at least half your grains are whole grains.
- Most dairy choices should be fat-free or low-fat.
- Vary your protein choices.

For further nutrition information, see appendix A

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Nutrition

Portion size is an important factor in healthy eating.

What about MyPlate portion size?

Portion size is an important factor in healthy eating. For a 2,000 calorie daily food plan, you need the amount featured in the table below from each food group. To find amounts personalized for you, go to ChooseMyPlate.gov.

Fruit	Veggie	Grains	Dairy	Protein
2 cups every day	2½ cups every day	6 ounces every day	3 cups every day	5½ ounces* every day
What counts as a cup?	What counts as a cup?	What counts as an ounce?	What counts as a cup?	What counts as an ounce?
1 cup of raw or cooked fruit or 100% fruit juice; ¼ cup dried fruit	1 cup of raw or cooked vegetables or vegetable juice; 2 cups of leafy green salad	1 slice of bread; ½ cup of cooked rice, cereal or pasta; 1 ounce of cereal	1 cup of milk, yogurt or fortified soymilk; 1½ ounces natural or 2 ounces processed cheese	1 ounce of lean meat, poultry or fish; 1 egg; 1 Tbsp peanut butter; ½ ounce nuts or seeds; ½ cup beans or peas

*Three ounces of meat is approximately the size of a deck of cards or the palm of a woman's hand.

How can I start to incorporate healthy nutrition into my daily routine?

Remember your ABCs.

A = Add What healthy activity can I add at this time?

B = Better What better choice could I make?

C = Change What could I change to make myself healthier?
 What do I want or need to do to act on it?



Remember:
 Starting small can lead to big changes!

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Physical Activity

Physical activity decreases the risk of developing cancer, as well as heart disease, and diabetes.

The ideal goal is to be physically active for 30 or more minutes every day. But even ten minutes every day helps!

Physical Activity

Staying physically active has many benefits. It is ideal to be physically active for 30 or more minutes every day. Physical activity can include: mowing the lawn, chopping wood, gardening, active housework, playing with kids, hiking or walking.

Physical activity decreases the risk of developing cancer, as well as heart disease and diabetes. It also makes a person feel better.

Physical activity helps to:

- Maintain an ideal body weight and prevent obesity by burning fat and reducing fat deposits
- Reduce stress and support sleep
- Regulate hormone levels
- Boost the body's natural defenses and strengthen the immune system
- Increase muscle and bone strength
- Improve mental health and a sense of well-being

Physical activity is associated with an overall:

- 10% to 30% decrease in risk of prostate cancer
- 30% to 40% decrease in risk of breast, endometrial (the lining of the uterus) and lung cancer
- 40% to 50% decrease in risk of colon cancer



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Physical Activity

Physical activity facilities are located within your community!

Physical Activity

Many communities include recreational parks and can include camping, shelters, trails, disc golfing, sports playing fields and much more. These parks may also include several year-round opportunities for activity.



Photo Credit Erin N. Bailey

Find out what is available in your community under local resources, appendix A

How can I start to incorporate physical activity into my daily routine?

Remember your ABCs.

A = Add What healthy activity can I **add** at this time?

B = Better What **better** choice could I make?

C = Change What could I **change** to make myself healthier?
What do I want or need to do to act on it?



Cancer Prevention & Self-Care

Maintain a Healthy Weight

Maintaining a healthy weight helps you reduce your cancer risk.

Weight loss is more likely to be successful when you change your habits, replacing old, unhealthy ones with new, healthy behaviors!

Maintain a Healthy Weight

Balancing the amount of food you eat with daily exercise will help you maintain a healthy weight and reduce your risk of cancer.

Maintaining a healthy weight also reduces risk for other chronic diseases such as diabetes, stroke and heart disease.

Being overweight is having extra body weight from muscle, bone, fat and/or water. Obesity is having a high amount of extra body fat.

Being overweight and obese is associated with increased risks of cancers of the esophagus, breast, endometrial (the lining of the uterus), colorectal, kidney, pancreas, thyroid and gallbladder.

How can I lose weight?

Weight loss is most likely to be successful when you change your habits, replacing old, unhealthy ones with new, healthy behaviors. To help do this, practice SELF:

- S** Smaller portions
- E** Exercise and eat healthy
- L**imit TV time
- F**ruits and vegetables

How can I start to incorporate maintaining a healthy weight into my daily routine?

Remember your ABCs.

A = Add What healthy activity can I add at this time?

B = Better What better choice could I make?

C = Change What could I change to make myself healthier?
What do I want or need to do to act on it?



Tobacco use is one of the leading causes of cancer.

A person who drinks alcohol AND uses tobacco has a much greater risk of developing cancer.

Tobacco

Tobacco use includes the use of snuff, smoking and chewing tobacco.

Tobacco use is one of the leading causes of cancer.

Tobacco use causes 90% of lung cancers.

Tobacco also increases your risk for the other following cancers: head and neck, esophagus, stomach, colon/rectum, bladder, kidney, pancreas, breast, uterus, ovaries, cervix and acute myeloid leukemia (blood cancer).

The effects of tobacco use are increased if you drink alcohol and use tobacco.

What Happens to Your Body When You Use Tobacco

- Your heart rate and blood pressure increase.
- Your teeth yellow and you have bad breath.
- You can ruin some of your taste buds, so you won't be able to taste your favorite foods as well.
- Smoking also causes dry, darkened skin and wrinkles.
- Nicotine use slows the circulation of blood and has been linked to erectile dysfunction. Cigars, pipe tobacco, snuff, chewing tobacco and cigarettes all contain nicotine.
- Pregnant women who smoke cigarettes run an increased risk of stillborn or premature infants, miscarriage or infants with low birth weight.

Secondhand Smoke

Secondhand smoke is a mixture of the smoke given off by the burning end of tobacco products and the smoke exhaled by smokers.

It contains the same cancer-causing agents or **carcinogens** as the smoke inhaled by smokers.

Everyone is affected by secondhand smoke, but young children and women are particularly vulnerable. Children exposed to secondhand smoke have an increased risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), asthma, bronchitis, middle ear infections and pneumonia.

What can you do?

- Decrease or eliminate tobacco and alcohol use
- Maintain a tobacco-free environment and avoid secondhand smoke, especially around women and children

Choosing Tobacco Free

Tobacco is a very addictive substance. Some people are able to stop smoking “cold turkey” without any help, but most people need support, encouragement, careful planning and several tries to quit.

Medications and counseling are also available to help people stop using tobacco.

The tobacco quit line is a helpful resource for people who have decided to quit tobacco. Friends and family members wanting to help their loved ones quit are also welcome to call the tobacco quit line.

1-800-QUIT-NOW

(1-800-784-8669)

Health Benefits of Quitting Smoking

Surgeon General's Report

The health benefits of quitting smoking start immediately after finishing your last cigarette. Here is a timeline of all the benefits.



- **Within 20 minutes of smoking that last cigarette**, the body begins to heal.
- **After 20 minutes:** Blood pressure and pulse return to normal, temperature of hands and feet return to normal.
- **After 8 hours:** Blood carbon monoxide level drops to normal. Blood oxygen level increases to normal.
- **After 24 hours:** Heart attack risk decreases.
- **After 48 hours:** Nerves start to restore. Ability to smell and taste improves.
- **After 2 weeks to 3 months:** Circulation improves. Walking is easier. Lung function increases up to 30%.
- **After 1 to 9 months:** Sinus congestion, coughing, fatigue and shortness of breath decrease. Cilia, tiny hair-like structures on the lung's lining, are restored in the lungs, increasing ability to handle mucus, clean the lungs and reduce infection. Body energy increases.

Quitting while you are younger will reduce your health risks more, but quitting at any age can give back years of life that would be lost by continuing to smoke.

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Tobacco

Save money not used for tobacco in a clear jar; use that money to reward yourself.

Tobacco Quit Tips

- Notice when and why you use tobacco. Keep a notebook and write down with whom, what you are doing and where you use tobacco.
- Keep your hands/fingers busy: Squeezing balls, pencils, or paper clips are good substitutes to satisfy that need for do stuff with your hands.
- Make a list of all the reasons you want to stop using tobacco. Keep the list with you so you can look at it often. Post it on mirrors, the refrigerator and other places you see frequently.
- Change your smoking habits: try to smoke with the opposite hand; smoke in only one place (outside!) and don't smoke in the car.
- Buy only one pack of cigarettes or one can of chew. Switch to a brand you don't like. Put tobacco in an inconvenient place.
- Ask a friend to quit using tobacco with you. If you cannot find one, ask a friend to support you.
- Save money not used for tobacco in a clear jar; use that money to reward yourself.
- Walk or do some form of physical activity every day.
- Call the Tobacco Quit Line at 1-800-QUIT-NOW or 1-800-784-8669.
- Set a quit date and make it happen!

How can I start to reduce my dependence on tobacco?

Remember your ABCs.

A = Add What healthy activity can I add at this time?

B = Better What better choice could I make?

C = Change What could I change to make myself healthier?
What do I want or need to do to act on it?



Set a quit date and make it happen!

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*Tips to Curb Your
Cravings*

Be patient with yourself: it takes time to learn how to live healthier.

Share the challenges you may experience with your family and friends to help them provide support and encouragement.

Tips to Curb Your Cravings

When you have the urge to use tobacco or overindulge in eating or drinking alcoholic beverages, Practice the 5 D's:

- D**elay
- D**rink water
- D**eep breathe
- D**istract
- D**o something else

Be patient with yourself as you learn how to live healthier.

Involve your family and friends.

Share the challenges you may experience with your family and friends to help them provide support and encouragement.

Celebrate your healthy choice.

You may feel more tired, irritable or have cravings. Be prepared and know these symptoms will pass.

Usually giving into cravings makes them worse. They generally subside within ten minutes, so try and do an alternate activity for that period of time until the craving subsides.

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& Self-Care**

Alcohol

Alcohol

Alcohol affects the entire body, including the brain, nervous system, liver, heart and the individual's emotional well-being.

Drinking alcohol increases the risk for several kinds of cancer, especially those of the mouth, throat, esophagus, liver, breast and colon. In general, these risks increase after about one daily drink for women and two daily drinks for men.

The risk of developing cancer is greater for people who use tobacco *and* drink alcohol.

Approximately 4% of cancer cases are related to chronic alcohol consumption.

Alcohol use is the primary cause of liver cancer.

From a nutritional point of view, alcohol has negative effects as well. Alcohol keeps the body from burning fat, particularly around the stomach; it has calories, which can add fat to body weight; and it provides no nutrients.

Alcohol is a depressant, regardless of how it makes you feel. It slows down your motor skills which control the way you think, speak, move and react.

Approximately 4% of cancer cases are related to chronic alcohol consumption.

The more alcohol a person consumes, the higher his or her risk is of developing cancer.

Easy Steps to Reduce Your Alcohol Intake

- Sit at a table away from the bar when you go out. This allows you to physically separate yourself from the area where drinks are served.
- Order food and a soda to start the night. You are likely to reduce your alcohol intake if you have a full stomach.
- Drink a non-alcoholic beverage in between every alcoholic beverage.
- Pour half of your canned or bottled beer into a glass and drink it slowly. Don't let the wait staff pressure you into buying more. Show them that you still have a half full bottle or can.
- Schedule weekend events that don't include alcohol.
- Keep a record of each day you drink and how much you drink. When you see how much you are drinking, it can help provide effective motivation for reducing alcohol intake.
- Local help is available. If you or someone you know is dependent on alcohol, please contact the agency listed in appendix A

Remember:
starting small can
lead to big
changes!

Be patient with
yourself: it takes
time to learn how
to live healthier.

Local resources
are available.

How can I start to reduce my alcohol intake?

Remember your ABCs.

A = Add What healthy activity can I **add** at this time?

B = Better What **better** choice could I make?

C = Change What could I **change** to make myself healthier?
What do I want or need to do to act on it?



Cancer Prevention & Self-Care

Sun Protection

Sun Protection

Protect yourself from the sun. Ultraviolet (UV) radiation causes premature aging and skin damage that can lead to skin cancer. UV radiation comes from the sun, sunlamps and tanning booths.



Ultraviolet (UV) radiation causes premature aging and skin damage that can lead to skin cancer.

Use sunscreen with at least SPF 15.

Wear sunscreen every day, all year round!

To avoid skin damage from the sun:

- Limit your midday sun exposure (from 10:00am to 2:00pm).
- Wear protective clothing (long sleeves and long pants and a broad brimmed hat) and sunglasses that absorb UV.
- Use sunscreen with an SPF (sun protection factor) of at least 15.
- Use broad-spectrum sunscreen. It is designed to protect you from two types of UV radiation (UVA and UVB).
- Wear sunscreen on a daily basis, all year round, not just during the summer.
- Reapply sunscreen every two to three hours to maintain protection. Always reapply after being in the water, even if the bottle says "waterproof."
- People of color are less likely to develop skin cancer than Caucasians, but they have a higher risk of dying from it. Regardless of skin color, protect yourself, perform regular skin self-exams, and obtain a professional full-body skin exam every year.

How can I protect myself from the sun?

Remember your ABCs.

A = Add What healthy activity can I add at this time?

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What do I want or need to do to act on it?



Cancer Prevention & Self-Care

Sexual Behavior

HPV will affect an estimated 75% to 80% of males and females in their lifetime.

HPV can cause cancer in both male and female genital areas, the mouth and the throat. HPV can also cause genital warts.

Sexual Behavior

Human Papilloma Viruses (HPVs) are a group of more than 150 related viruses. Some HPVs cause infection and abnormal tissue growth in the human body.

HPV is the most common sexually transmitted disease and will affect an estimated 75% to 80% of males and females in their lifetime.

HPV can also cause cancer in both male and female genital areas, the mouth and the throat. HPV can also cause genital warts. That means that HPV infection can happen without having intercourse!

Almost all cases of cervical cancer in women are caused by just a few strains of HPV. These strains are targeted by the HPV vaccine.

Some people with an HPV infection have an increased risk of developing certain cancers. For example, HPV is almost always the cause of cervical cancer. African American women have a 40% chance of developing cervical cancer and a 50% chance of dying from it. Other HPV related cancers include cancer of the vulva, vagina, penis, anus, head and neck.



Cancer Prevention & Self-Care

Sexual Behavior

Learn more about the HPV vaccine and what you can do to prevent HPV infection.

How can you prevent HPV infection?

- **Limit your number of sexual partners.** People can lower their chances of getting HPV by being in a faithful relationship with one partner; limiting their number of partners; and choosing a partner who has had no or few prior partners.
- **Use condoms.** Correct and consistent condom use, during intercourse and oral sex, can reduce the risk of HPV infection. However, condoms are unlikely to provide complete protection against HPV because areas not covered by a condom can be infected by the virus.
- **Get the HPV vaccine.** The HPV vaccine can help prevent HPV infection. This vaccine is given as a series of 3 shots over 6 months and works best if given before sexual activity. The HPV vaccine has been recommended for males and females ages 9 to 26. The HPV vaccine does not protect against all forms of HPV or other STDs. Continue to practice safe sex after receiving the vaccine.

The HPV vaccine is available for free or reduced cost through the agency listed in appendix A

How can I start to incorporate HPV prevention into my daily routine?

Remember your ABCs.

A = Add What healthy activity can I add at this time?

B = Better What better choice could I make?

C = Change What could I change to make myself healthier?
What do I want or need to do to act on it?



Cancer Prevention & Self-Care

Recommended Cancer Screenings

Checking for cancer in a person who does not have any symptoms of the disease is called screening.

Talk to your health care provider and have recommended cancer screening exams.

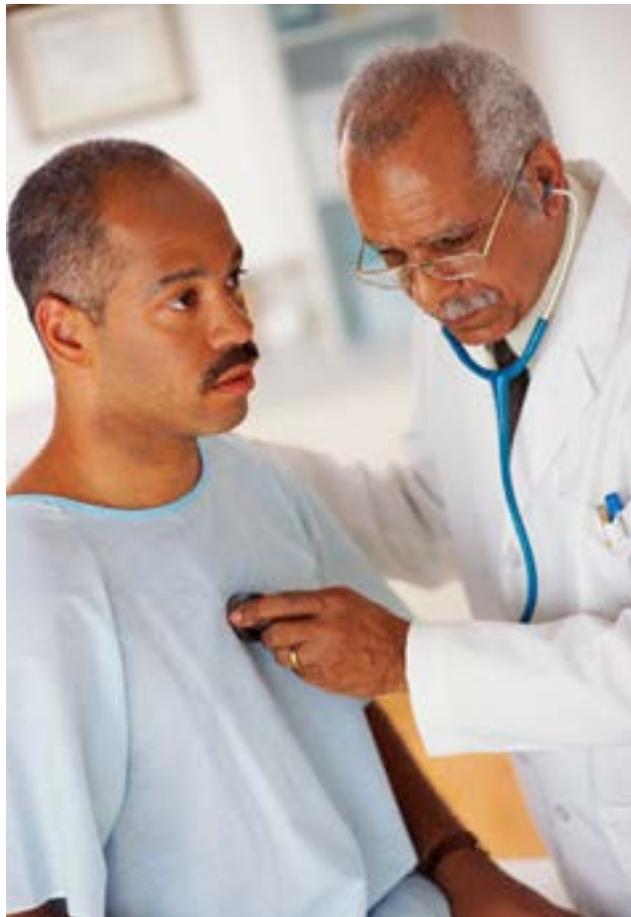
Recommended Cancer Screenings

Another healthy choice that we can make is the decision to get screened. **Screening** is checking for cancer in a person who does not have any symptoms of the disease.

Regular screening and self-examination for certain cancers may not prevent cancer, but can increase your chances of detecting it early – when treatment is more likely to be successful.

A health care provider can recommend the best screening plan for you based on current screening guidelines, your age, family history and personal history of cancer. Also, remember to update your health care provider as your family history changes.

Also, for more in-depth information about screening see “*Section 3: Cancer Screening and Detection.*”



Summary of Key Points

After completing this section, you should understand cancer risk factors and prevention. Let's review the important points from this section.

- ☑ Starting small can lead to healthy changes.
 - ☑ Take care of yourself by doing at least one healthy thing for you every day.
 - ☑ There are 8 healthy choices you can make to reduce your risk of developing cancer.
 1. Eat 2 to 2 ½ cups of fruits and vegetables every day.
 2. Stay physically active.
 3. Maintain a healthy body weight.
 4. Choose to be tobacco free.
 5. Decrease or eliminate alcohol intake.
 6. Wear sun protection.
 7. Prevent HPV.
 8. Have recommended cancer screening exams.



Where to Find More Information

Listed below are a few of the many helpful national cancer resources to find reliable cancer-related information and support.

National Cancer Institute (NCI)

www.cancer.gov

1-800-4CANCER (1-800-422-6237)

Provides accurate and up-to-date information about cancer types, prevention, detection, diagnosis, treatment, survivorship and end of life care.

American Cancer Society (ACS)

www.cancer.org

1-800-227-2345

Provides literature, information and resources on cancer detection, treatment, survivorship and end of life. Local programs may be available in your area. ACS also conducts and funds cancer research.

Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

www.cdc.gov/cancer/

1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)

Provides literature, information and resources on cancer prevention, screening and specific cancer types. The CDC website also includes cancer-related messaging through podcasts and television public service announcements.

Where to Find More Information

Listed below are a few of the many helpful interactive resources available to find reliable cancer-related information.

MyPlate

<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/multimedia/index.html>

MyPlate helps individuals use the Dietary Guidelines to make healthy food choices, find balance between food and physical activity, get the most out of calories and stay within daily calorie needs.

Understanding Cancer Risk

<http://understandingrisk.cancer.gov/>

Website offers interactive activities to understand cancer risk.

Your Disease Risk

<http://www.yourdiseaserisk.wustl.edu/>

Center for Cancer Prevention is an interactive site to assess health and risk for cancer and other chronic disease.

Glossary of Terms

Benign: A tumor that is not cancerous and does not spread to other parts of the body.

Cancer: A term for a disease that develops when cells divide and form more cells without control or order. There are more than 200 different types of cancer.

Carcinogen: A substance or agent that is known to cause cancer.

Cells: Basic unit or building block of human tissue.

Family History: The health history of related individuals.

Human Papillomavirus Virus (HPV): A type of virus that can cause abnormal tissue growth (for example, warts) and other changes to cells. Infection for a long time with certain types of HPV can cause cervical cancer.

Prevention: Eliminate, or decrease the risk of disease. Health promotion and education to support wellness.

Risk Factor: Something in an individual, in her or his lifestyle, or environment, which increases the chance of developing cancer.

Screening: Checking for disease when there are no symptoms.

Secondhand Smoke: A mixture of the smoke given off by the burning end of tobacco products and the smoke exhaled by smokers.

Self-Care: Looking after yourself in a healthy way.

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