

Cancer Risk

- Although genes influence your risk for cancer, most of the difference in cancer risk between people is due to factors that are not inherited. Avoid tobacco products, achieve or maintain a healthy weight, stay active throughout life, and eat a healthy diet to greatly reduce your lifetime risk of developing or dying from cancer.
- These same behaviors are also linked with a lower risk of developing heart disease and diabetes.

Eat a healthy diet, with an emphasis on plant foods

- Choose foods and drinks in amounts that help you achieve and maintain a healthy weight.
- Read food labels to become more aware of portion sizes and calories. Be aware that "low-fat" or "non-fat" does not necessarily mean "low-calorie."
- Eat smaller portions you eat high-calorie foods.
- Choose vegetables, whole fruit, and other low-calorie foods instead of calorie-dense foods such as French fries, potato and other chips, ice cream, donuts, and sweets.
- Limit your intake of sugar-sweetened beverages such as soft drinks, sports drinks, and fruit-flavored drinks.
- When you eat away from home, be especially mindful to choose food low in calories, fat, and added sugar, and avoid eating large portion sizes.
- Limit how much processed meat and red meat you eat.
 - Limit your intake of processed meats such as bacon, sausage, lunch meats, and hot dogs.
- Choose fish, poultry, or beans instead of red meat (beef, pork, and lamb).
 - If you eat red meat, choose lean cuts and eat smaller portions.
- Prepare meat, poultry, and fish by baking, broiling, or poaching rather than by frying or charbroiling.
- Eat at least 2½ cups of vegetables and fruits each day.
 - Include vegetables and fruits at every meal and for snacks.
 - Eat a variety of vegetables and fruits each day.
 - Emphasize whole fruits and vegetables
 - If you drink juice, choose 100% fruit or vegetable juice.
 - Limit your use of creamy sauces, dressings, and dips with fruits and vegetables.

- Choose whole grains instead of refined grain products.
 - Choose whole-grain breads, pasta, and cereals (such as barley and oats) instead of breads, cereals, and pasta made from refined grains, and brown rice instead of white rice.
 - Limit your intake of refined carbohydrate foods, including pastries, candy, sugar sweetened breakfast cereals, and other high-sugar foods.
- Studies showing that higher vegetable and fruit intake reduces cancer risk have led researchers to try to figure out which specific nutrients from these foods are responsible.
 - But many studies have not found that supplements containing certain nutrients (like vitamins) reduce cancer risk, and some have even suggested they may cause harm.
 - This is complicated because researchers must try to choose how best to give the supplement, including the exact dose, what group of people to give it to, and how long to give it for, which isn't always known.
 - Studies of nutritional supplements to reduce cancer risk have not all been disappointing, but for the most part, research does not support their use in lowering cancer risk.
 - Foods and nutrients probably each have small effects on health that add up when consumed together, and they may interact in complex ways that are not well understood.
- The best advice at this time is to eat whole foods as part of an overall healthy diet as outlined in this guideline, with special emphasis on controlling calorie intake to help get to and maintain a healthy weight.
- If you drink alcohol, limit their intake to no more than 2 drinks per day for men and 1 drink per day for women.
 - The recommended limit is lower for women because of their smaller body size and slower breakdown of alcohol.