



SCREENING

# 8 RIGHT WAYS<sup>®</sup>

TOSTAYHEALTHYANDPREVENTCANCER

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CANCER

KNOW YOUR RISK. CHANGE YOUR FUTURE.

LIFESTYLE



Eight healthy behaviors can go a long way toward improving your health and lowering your risk of many cancers as well as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and osteoporosis. And they're not as complicated as you might think.

So take control of your health, and encourage your family to do the same. Choose one or two behaviors to start with. Once you've got those down, move on to the others.

## 1. Maintain a Healthy Weight

Keeping your weight in check is often easier said than done, but a few simple tips can help. First off, if you're overweight, focus on not gaining any more weight. This by itself can improve your health. Then, when you're ready, try to take off some extra pounds for an even greater health boost.

### Tips

- Fit physical activity and movement into your life each day.
- Limit time in front of the TV and computer.
- Eat a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.
- Choose smaller portions, and eat more slowly.

## 2. Exercise Regularly

Few things are as good for you as regular physical activity. While it can be hard to find the time, it's important to fit in at least 30 minutes of activity every day. More is even better, but any amount is better than none.

### Tips

- Choose activities you enjoy. Many things count as exercise, like walking, gardening, and dancing.
- Make exercise a habit by setting aside the same time for it each day—try going to the gym each day at lunchtime or taking a walk regularly after dinner.
- Stay motivated by exercising with someone.
- Play active games with your kids regularly, and go on family walks and bike rides when the weather allows.

## 3. Don't Smoke

You've heard it before. If you smoke, quitting is absolutely the best thing you can do for your health. Yes, it's hard, but it's also far from impossible. Over 1,000 Americans stop for good every day.

### Tips

- Keep trying! It often takes 6 or 7 tries before you quit for good. Talk to a health care provider for help.
- Join a quit-smoking program. Your workplace or health plan may offer one.
- When appropriate, talk to your kids about the dangers of smoking and chewing tobacco. The best message to kids is getting smoke-free yourself.

## 4. Eat a Healthy Diet

Despite confusing news reports, the basics of healthy eating are actually quite simple. You should focus on fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, and keep red meat to a minimum. It's also important to cut back on bad fats (saturated and trans fats), and choose healthy fats (polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats) more often. Taking a multivitamin with folate every day is a great nutrition insurance policy.

### Tips

- Make fruits and vegetables a part of every meal. Put fruit on your cereal. Eat vegetables as a snack.
- Choose chicken, fish, or beans, instead of red meat.
- Choose whole-grain cereal, brown rice, and whole-wheat bread over their more refined counterparts.
- Choose dishes made with olive or canola oil, which are high in healthy fats.
- Cut back on fast food and store-bought snacks (like cookies), which are high in bad fats.
- Buy a 100% RDA multivitamin that contains folate.

## 5. Drink Alcohol Only in Moderation, If At All

Moderate drinking is good for the heart, as many people already know, but it can also increase the risk of cancer. If you don't drink, don't feel that you need to start. If you already drink moderately (less than 1 drink a day for women, less than 2 drinks a day for men), there's probably no reason to stop. People who drink more, though, should cut back.

### Tips

- Choose non-alcoholic beverages at meals and parties.
- Avoid occasions centered around alcohol.
- Talk to a health care professional if you feel you have a problem with alcohol.
- When appropriate, discuss the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse with children. A health care professional or school counselor can help.

## 6. Protect Yourself From the Sun

While the warm sun is certainly inviting, too much exposure to it can lead to skin cancer, including serious melanoma. Skin damage starts early in childhood, so it's especially important to protect children.

### Tips

- Steer clear of direct sunlight between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. (peak burning hours). It's the best way to protect yourself.
- Use hats, long-sleeve shirts, and sunscreens with SPF15 or higher.
- Don't use sun lamps or tanning booths. Try self-tanning creams instead.
- Protect kids first and set a good example by always wearing sunscreen and the right clothing.

## 7. Protect Yourself From Sexually Transmitted Infections

Among other problems, sexually transmitted infections—like human papillomavirus (HPV)—are linked to a number of different cancers. Protecting yourself from these infections can lower your risk.

### Tips

- Aside from not having sex, the best protection is to be in a committed, monogamous relationship with someone who does not have a sexually transmitted infection.
- For all other situations, be sure to always use a condom and follow other safe sex practices. Never rely on your partner to have a condom. Always be prepared.
- When appropriate, discuss with children the importance of abstinence and safe sex.
- Vaccinate girls and young women as well as boys and young men against HPV. Talk to a health professional for more information.

## 8. Get Screening Tests

There are a number of important screening tests that can help protect against cancer. Some of these tests find cancer early when they are most treatable, while others can actually help keep cancer from developing in the first place. For colorectal cancer alone, regular screening could save over 30,000 lives each year. That's three times the number of people killed by drunk drivers in the United States in all of 2011. Talk to a health care professional about which tests you should have and when.

### Cancers that should be tested for regularly:

- Colon and rectal cancer
- Cervical cancer
- Breast cancer
- Lung cancer (in current or past heavy smokers)

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**Know your risk. Change your future.** Ever wonder whether or not you are at risk for a certain type of Cancer? Heart Disease? Diabetes? Osteoporosis? Stroke? A few clicks of the mouse at the "Your Disease Risk" Web site will tell you your risk. Answer a few questions about your medical history, eating habits, exercise and behaviors and you'll get a personalized estimate of your risk for each major disease plus tips on how to lower your risk. Go to [www.yourdiseaserisk.wustl.edu](http://www.yourdiseaserisk.wustl.edu) and find out how knowing your risk can change your future.

