

Do women know which lifestyle choices may affect cancer risk?

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The lifetime risk for cancer is greater than 1 in 3 for women in the U.S., but most women do not make the lifestyle choices recommended by the American Cancer Society to reduce that risk and prevent cancer. A multifaceted new survey determined how women view diet and exercise

in relationship to cancer and whether they believe they are engaging in healthy behaviors, and whether their diet and exercise choices really meet the minimum recommendations. The results are presented in *Journal of Women's Health*.

In "Lifestyle and Cancer Prevention in Women: Knowledge, Perceptions, and Compliance with Recommended Guidelines," Jennifer Irvine Vidrine, PhD and colleagues from The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center (Houston) and Prevention Magazine (Emmaus, PA) report that less than 10% of the women who said they eat a healthy diet actually met the American Cancer Society minimum fruit and vegetable intake recommendations, which is 2 servings of fruit and 3 servings of vegetables per day. Less than 40% of the women who reported [regular physical activity](#) met the [American Cancer Society](#) minimum recommendations of 30 minutes of [moderate physical activity](#) five days per week. Women with less education and racial/ethnic minorities had greater discrepancies between beliefs and behavior.

Overall, more than half of the women who participated in the survey failed to meet the minimum recommendations for physical activity and/or for daily consumption of fruits and vegetables.

"The results of this study suggest that we need to help women find practical ways to integrate adequate levels of cancer prevention behaviors into their daily lives," says Susan G. Kornstein, MD, Editor-in-Chief of *Journal of Women's Health*, Executive Director of the Virginia Commonwealth University Institute for Women's Health, Richmond, VA, and President of the Academy of Women's Health.

More information: The article is available free on the *Journal of Women's Health* website at <http://www.liebertpub.com/jwh>.

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