

Survey: 9 of 10 americans take cancer prevention steps

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(HealthDay)—About 95 percent of Americans take some action to

prevent cancer, according to a new survey.

Three-quarters of respondents said they don't smoke; 74 percent limit their alcohol consumption; 72 percent stick to a healthy diet; and 90 percent are aware of their family's [cancer](#) history, the survey found.

Women are far more likely than men to take all three preventive steps and more—discussing risk and prevention with their [health care provider](#), getting the recommended amount of sleep, and undergoing recommended cancer screenings.

The fourth edition of the Mayo Clinic National Health Checkup also reported that 62 percent said they or a loved one had been diagnosed with cancer. Sixty-one percent are concerned that they will develop cancer during their lifetime.

Despite the concern, many respondents have an optimistic attitude: 78 percent expect a cure for cancer someday, and 57 percent expressed hope it will happen within 20 years.

The survey also asked about barriers to seeking care if a respondent noticed possible cancer symptoms. Forty-six percent cited finances and 41 percent cited time to make and go to appointments. These concerns were most often cited by Hispanics (64 percent), millennials (59 percent) and blacks (57 percent).

About two-thirds of respondents who have had cancer or who have loved ones who've been diagnosed said they encountered barriers to care. Those included financial issues (52 percent), insurance (42 percent) and schedule availability (29 percent).

Millennials and Generation Xers were more likely than baby boomers (72 percent to 49 percent) to cite finances or insurance coverage as

barriers.

"Cancer affects millions of Americans each year, including those in treatment and those supporting their loved ones. It's not easy to talk about cancer, but this edition of the Mayo Clinic National Health Checkup opens the door for dialogue," said Dr. Minetta Liu, a medical oncologist at the Minnesota-based clinic.

"The better we understand national attitudes and actions toward [health](#), the better equipped we'll be to educate and empower healthy decisions," Liu added in a clinic news release.

More information: The U.S. National Cancer Institute has more on [cancer prevention](#).

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