

Lower your cancer risk with easy diet changes

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You have the power to reduce your risk for cancer. With a few lifestyle changes and perseverance, you can be well on your way to a healthier you.

Being overweight and obese is linked to an increased risk of many cancers. Aim for about 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity or 75 minutes of vigorous-intensity exercise over the course of the week.

In addition to increased [physical activity](#), dietary changes can help you maintain a healthy weight.

As always, continue to follow any diet restrictions recommended by your physician.

1. Eat a variety of fruits and vegetables, beans and legumes every day

Focus on whole, fresh fruits and vegetables. These foods contain fiber and other beneficial vitamins and minerals. Flash-frozen fruits and vegetables are a great option, too, as long as there are no added ingredients.

2. Choose whole grains instead of refined products

Eliminate refined grains from your daily meals (white bread, pasta and white rice). Opt instead for whole grain versions of bread, pasta and cereal and stick to brown rice.

3. Avoid sugary drinks and limit high-calorie, calorie-dense foods

A diet high in added sugar can contribute to excessive weight gain. Limit your intake of sugary beverages ([soft drinks](#), [sports drinks](#) and [fruit drinks](#)) as well as calorie-dense foods like fast foods, cookies, cakes, ice cream, doughnuts and other sweets.

4. Limit alcohol consumption

There is now strong evidence that links alcohol to an increased risk for many cancers, including cancers of the mouth, larynx, esophagus, liver, breast, and colon and rectum. For those who drink alcohol, consumption should be limited to one drink per day for women and two drinks per day for men. One drink is defined as 12 ounces of beer, 5 ounces of wine, or 1/2 ounce of distilled spirits or hard liquor.

5. Go easy on red and processed meats

There is some evidence that suggests [red meat consumption](#) can contribute to risk of colorectal cancer. Moderation is recommended at less than 12-18 ounces of red meat per week. If you eat red meat, eat smaller portions and leaner cuts of meat. Or opt for fish, poultry or beans instead. And try to cut back on processed meats like bacon, lunch meats and hot dogs.

More information: For additional recommendations on nutrition and its relation to cancer risk, visit the [American Institute of Cancer Research](#).

Provided by University of Kentucky

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