

# Resolve to reduce your cancer risk this year

4 January 2017



(HealthDay)—More than half of cancer deaths could be prevented through healthy habits such as eating right, exercising and not smoking, according to the American Cancer Society.

Doctors at Philadelphia's Fox Chase Cancer Center offer some advice to help you settle into the new year with a new attitude toward [cancer prevention](#):

- **Get screened.** "Some risk factors cannot be controlled, such as family history or getting older," said Dr. Namrata Vijayvergia, assistant professor in the center's department of hematology/oncology. "That's why getting regular recommended cancer screenings may be just as important as living a [healthy lifestyle](#)." Screening tests are available for many forms of cancer. Ask your doctor when to begin and how often to be screened.
- **Follow a healthy diet.** Excess weight boosts the risk of cancer in the breast, colon and rectum, the lining of the uterus, as well as the esophagus, pancreas and kidney. "I urge everyone to get to a [healthy weight](#) and stay there," Vijayvergia said. To improve your diet, watch portion sizes; limit high-calorie foods, processed meats and red meat; eat at least 1.5 cups of fruits and vegetables per day; and limit alcohol to two drinks a day for men and one for women.
- **Stay active.** The American Cancer Society recommends adults get at least 150 minutes of moderate exercise or 75 minutes of vigorous exercise per week. "Physical activity is essential, as it also helps to reduce the risk of heart disease and diabetes, and can improve hormone levels and the immune system," Vijayvergia said in a center news release.
- **Don't use tobacco.** Smoking has been linked to many types of cancer, including lung, esophagus, larynx, mouth, throat, kidney, bladder, liver, pancreas, stomach, cervix, colon and rectum. "The longer you smoke and the more packs per day you smoke, the higher your risk," Vijayvergia said. "Quitting smoking, or not starting, is the best thing you can do to help prevent cancer—no matter your age and even if you've smoked for years."
- **Don't get too much sun.** Skin cancer is the most common type of cancer, according to the American Cancer Society. To protect yourself, cover up with long-sleeved shirts, long pants, a hat and sunglasses when possible. Also, use sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or more and avoid sun exposure between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. And don't use tanning beds or sun lamps.

**More information:** The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has more about [cancer](#).

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APA citation: Resolve to reduce your cancer risk this year (2017, January 4) retrieved 30 September 2020 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2017-01-cancer-year.html>

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