



Health & Fitness Weekly Wellness Message

February is National Cancer Prevention Month. Each year more than 572,000 Americans die from cancer; about one-third of these deaths are linked to poor diet, physical inactivity, and carrying too much weight. According to the American Cancer Society, except for quitting smoking, some of the most important things you can do to help reduce your cancer risk are:

- **Get to and stay at a healthy weight throughout life.** Being overweight or obese increases the risk of several cancers, including cancers of the breast (in women past menopause), colon, endometrium, esophagus, kidney, among others. Excess weight causes the body to produce and circulate more of the hormones estrogen and insulin, which can stimulate cancer growth. You can check your weight status by calculating your Body Mass Index (BMI), a score based on the relationship between your height and weight. Keep in mind BMI has limitations for those who may carry more muscle mass. You can click on the following link to check your BMI using an on-line calculator:
<http://www.nhlbisupport.com/bmi/bminojs.htm>
- **Be physically active on a regular basis.** Being active helps reduce your cancer risk by helping with weight control, and can also help improve your hormone levels and the way your immune system works. The latest recommendations for adults call for at least 150 minutes of moderate intensity or 75 minutes of vigorous intensity activity each week, or an equivalent combination, preferably spread throughout the week. This is over and above usual daily activities like using the stairs instead of the elevator at your office or doing housework.
- **Make healthy food choices with a focus on plant-based foods.** Eating well not only benefits your health but can also reduce your cancer risk. When trying to build a “preventative” diet, make sure these components are part of your plan:
 - **Vegetables and fruits:** Eat at least 5 servings of vegetables and fruits each day. Try to eat those with the most color. These foods are packed with vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and many other substances that work together to lower risk of many cancers.
 - **Whole grains:** Aim for at least 3 servings or a total of 48 grams of whole grains each day.
 - **Processed and red meats:** Cutting back on processed meats like hot dogs, bologna, bacon, and deli meat, and red meats like beef, pork, and lamb may help reduce the risk of colon and prostate cancers.

Finding cancer early can give you a better chance of beating the disease. Check out the latest screening guidelines to help you determine which tests you might need to find certain cancers at their earliest stage:

<http://www.cancer.org/Healthy/FindCancerEarly/CancerScreeningGuidelines/american-cancer-society-guidelines-for-the-early-detection-of-cancer>

Prevention Checklist for men:

<http://www.cancer.org/acs/groups/content/@nho/documents/webcontent/acsq-009104.pdf>

Prevention Checklist for women:

<http://www.cancer.org/acs/groups/content/@nho/documents/webcontent/acsq-009098.pdf>

How can you help those going through treatment? According to the Centers for Disease Control, there are nearly 12 million cancer survivors in the United States today. However, cancer treatments can bring on both physical and emotional challenges for survivors and those who care for them. A series of free phone and online workshops from CancerCare offers survivors and their loved ones practical information to help them cope with the concerns that can arise during and after treatment. The workshops are open to the public and are free, but you must register in advance. You can call 1-800-813-4673 or click on the following link for more information:

<http://www.cancer.org/Cancer/news/Features/workshops-help-survivors-cope-after-cancer-treatment>

UPCOMING NOTEWORTHY EVENTS: Executive Health Assessments/treadmill tests
Wednesday, March 7th
Building 59, room 118
Stop by and sign up!!

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