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HealthyLiving



Exercise May Help Lower Your Breast Cancer Risk

October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, a perfect time to take steps to help lower your risk of developing breast cancer. It is not always clear why some women get breast cancer while others don't, but we do know there are some things you can do to improve your odds of staying healthy.

Exercise is one of them. Evidence is growing that regular exercise helps reduce your cancer risk. It also helps improve your hormone levels and the way your immune system works and helps keep your weight under control.

While being too heavy may seem like a chiefly cosmetic issue, the truth is carrying too much weight can take a real toll on your health. Being overweight or obese can raise your risk of breast cancer, especially after menopause. And it's linked to other forms of cancer, as well as heart disease, diabetes, and other conditions.

The American Cancer Society recommends at least 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous exercise at least 5 days a week to lower your risk of cancer; for breast cancer risk specifically, 45 to 60 minutes are even better. Moderate exercise includes activities that make you breathe as hard as you would during a brisk walk, like bicycling, vacuuming, and gardening. Vigorous activities, like running, make your heart beat faster, make you breathe faster and deeper, and make you sweat.

In addition to getting regular exercise and maintaining a healthy weight, you can take steps to protect your breast health by getting a mammogram and breast exam by a health professional every year starting at age 40. Younger women also need periodic breast exams.

If you find it a challenge to fit exercise and other healthy habits into your daily routine, the American Cancer Society Choose You® program can help. This online program encourages women to put their own health first in the fight against cancer and provides free tips, tools, and resources to help. Check it out at chooseyou.com.



CLICK HERE for tools to help you make healthier choices and reach your goals.

Pilates for Flexibility, Strength, and Stress-Relief

Pilates may seem like the hot new fitness trend, but it was actually developed during World War I by Joseph Pilates to treat patients and soldiers. It's a body conditioning routine that's designed to improve mental and physical well-being, increase flexibility, and strengthen muscles. Exercises are done on mats or machines.

You can start practicing Pilates regardless of your fitness level. But it's possible to injure yourself if you have a health condition or don't do the moves correctly. So, get your doctor's OK and then find a certified

instructor. Make sure the instructor has completed several hundred hours of training in Pilates, not one quick weekend course.

If you plan to use Pilates machines at your gym or health club, make sure a qualified instructor is there to teach you how to use them and supervise your exercises.

Movements in Pilates are strong, flexible, and slow. Breathing is in rhythm with your body movements. People generally wear comfortable clothes while exercising, like shorts or tights and a T-shirt or tank top, and no shoes.

People who do Pilates regularly say it improves their posture, makes them less prone to injury, and helps them experience better overall health.

Because Pilates is mostly about strength and flexibility, pair it with a form of aerobic exercise like swimming or brisk walking to make sure your heart gets a good workout, too.



[CLICK HERE](#) for our guidelines on how much exercise you need.

New Chemo Cards Express Love and Support

If you know someone undergoing chemotherapy for cancer treatment, consider showing your support with new *Chemo Cards* from the American Cancer Society. Each card features a positive, warm-hearted message to encourage, cheer, and give hope to people undergoing chemotherapy.

There are 46 different cards appropriate for giving by family, friends, neighbors, coworkers, caregivers, and health professionals. Some cards specifically address hair loss associated with chemotherapy; others simply offer friendship, love, and support.

The cards are designed by artist Tani Miller, author of a whimsically illustrated, upbeat book called *Chemo and Me: My Hair Loss Experience*. Both the book and the cards are available for purchase through the American Cancer Society online bookstore. Cards come with brightly colored envelopes and are available in singles and in six-packs.



[CLICK HERE](#) to order *Chemo Cards* from the American Cancer Society online bookstore.

Healthier Halloween

Spooky costumes, trick-or-treating, loads of candy – it's no wonder kids (and even some grown-ups) look forward to Halloween all year long.

Of course, bingeing on candy isn't the healthiest activity, so lots of parents look for ways to cut down on the amount of candy their kids bring home. Some tried-and-true tips include giving them a smaller bag to carry or limiting the number of houses they are allowed to visit.

A lot of parents let their kids have more sweets than usual, while still setting limits so they don't overdo it. Some keep the candy out of sight and allow a few pieces a day. Others buy back the candy from their kids and let them use the money to buy a toy or game.

Another idea is to have healthier Halloween-themed foods on hand so the kids aren't as tempted by candy. For example:

- Bob for apples.
- Roast pumpkin seeds and bake pumpkin muffins.
- Pour popcorn into clear plastic gloves to make "skeleton" hands.
- Scoop out oranges and mix with other cut-up fruit to make jack-o'-lantern fruit cups.
- Decorate mini pizzas with vegetables to make spooky faces.

Or start a trend by giving out small toys and stickers instead of candy to the children who come to your door.



For the Love of Tea

For many people, tea is more than just a drink. It's a ritual to start the day, a soothing break from chores, or a way to unwind and relax before bedtime. After water, tea is the most commonly consumed beverage in the world.

Drinking tea has been associated with health benefits for centuries. That's because tea is made from leaves that contain flavonoids, a kind of antioxidant. And antioxidants may lower the risk of some diseases.

But there is a lot of conflicting evidence about the health benefits of drinking tea. More research is needed before we can say for certain whether tea makes any difference to cholesterol, blood pressure, memory, bone and joint health, or cancer.

What we do know is that tea is a healthy alternative to sodas and sugary fruit juices, which have a lot of calories. But don't undermine your efforts by adding



cream, sugar, or high-calorie flavorings to your tea. Stick to nonfat milk or fresh-squeezed lemon and experiment with the wide variety of teas available. Choose a dainty floral cup or favorite mug and start your own tea ritual.

Keep Your Salads Lean and Green (and Red, Orange, Purple ...)

Salad is a healthy choice for lunch or dinner, isn't it? That depends on what's in it, or perhaps more importantly, what's on it. Dressing, cheese, bacon, nuts, and seeds add calories and fat that can turn a light salad into a diet disaster.

Follow these tips to keep your salads healthy without sacrificing flavor.

- Choose a variety of fresh, colorful vegetables at their peak flavor, like dark green spinach leaves, red bell peppers, orange carrots, and red onions.
- Skip fatty toppings like cheese, bacon, nuts, and seeds. If you must indulge, use only a little and choose those with greater nutrition value.
- Use less salad dressing. In restaurants, ask for the dressing on the side.
- Experiment with parsley, garlic, oregano, basil, chives, rosemary, thyme, and other herbs; sprinkle them on your salad or add them to a simple vinaigrette made with olive oil.
- At the salad bar, pass up high-calorie and high-fat add-ons like coleslaw, potato salad, and creamy fruit salad.
- Add variety to your salad with high-fiber, lower calorie items like beans, raw vegetables, and fresh and dried fruit.



[CLICK HERE](#) to find healthy recipes for salads and other dishes.

Delicious, Healthy, Versatile Beans

Beans are a smart, healthy choice because they're high in fiber and disease-fighting antioxidants, and low in sugar and fat. They also contain important nutrients like iron, zinc, and folate. Your body digests beans slowly, which makes you feel fuller longer, and that helps keep you from overeating.

The United States leads the world in dry bean production, and there are hundreds of varieties that can be incorporated into delicious soups, stews, chilis, and countless other main dishes and side dishes.

To prep dry beans for cooking, you have to soak them first. To do this the traditional way, add 1 pound of dried beans to 10 cups of water. Cover and refrigerate 6-8 hours or overnight. Drain and rinse the beans, then use in your favorite recipe.

If you're short on time, use the quick-soak method: In a stockpot, bring 10 cups of water to a boil. Add 1 pound dried beans and return to a boil; let boil 2-3 minutes. Cover and set aside at room temperature 1 hour. Drain and rinse the beans.

Add more beans to your life and celebrate National Chili Month this October with our delicious Caribbean Chili recipe featuring black beans from *The American Cancer Society's Healthy Eating Cookbook*.

Caribbean Chili

4 cups dried black beans, soaked
8 cups water
2 jalapeño peppers, chopped
1 tablespoon grated fresh ginger
1 bay leaf
1 cup cilantro, chopped, divided
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
½ tablespoon mustard seeds
2 tablespoons chili powder
½ tablespoon oregano
5 cups of tomatoes, peeled and chopped
½ cup sun-dried tomatoes
⅓ cup uncooked bulgur wheat
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon black pepper
4 cups cooked rice



Drain beans. Place in large pot with 8 cups of water and bring to a boil. Add peppers, ginger, bay leaf, and ½ cup cilantro. Cover and simmer for 1-½ hours. Remove from heat. Remove bay leaf and discard. In a separate pot add cumin seeds, mustard seeds, chili powder, oregano, and tomatoes. Simmer on low heat for half an hour, stirring frequently. Combine bulgur wheat with ½ cup of boiling water in a separate bowl and let sit for 10 minutes. Take 1 cup of the cooked beans, along with some of the cooking liquid, and purée. Pour this purée back into the bean mixture, along with tomato mixture, bulgur wheat, salt, and pepper. Simmer for 10 minutes. Serve over rice and add remaining cilantro to top of bowl before serving.



[CLICK HERE](#) to order this and other great books from the American Cancer Society bookstore.

In the Next Issue: • Update Your Family Cancer History • Dance Your Way to Fitness • Make a Healthier Turkey Dressing

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