

A Special Message from the President

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IMPORTANT DO'S and DON'TS ABOUT CANCER

1. Don't use Tobacco

Using any type of tobacco puts you on a collision course with cancer. Smoking has been linked to various types of cancer — including cancer of the lung, bladder, cervix and kidney. And, chewing tobacco has been linked to cancer of the oral cavity and pancreas. Even if you don't use tobacco, exposure to second hand smoke might increase your risk of lung cancer. Avoiding tobacco — or deciding to stop using it — is one of the most important health decisions you can make. It's also an important part of cancer prevention. If you need help quitting tobacco, ask your doctor about stop-smoking products and other strategies for quitting.

2. Eat a Healthy Diet

Although making healthy selections at the grocery store and at mealtime can't guarantee cancer prevention, it might help reduce your risk. Consider these guidelines:

Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables. Base your diet on fruits, vegetables and other foods from plant sources — such as whole grains and beans. Limit fat. Eat lighter and leaner by choosing fewer high-fat foods, particularly those from animal sources. High-fat diets tend to be higher in calories and might increase the risk of overweight or obesity — which can, in turn, increase cancer risk.

3. Limit Alcohol Consumption

If you choose to drink alcohol, do so only in moderation. The risk of various types of cancer — including cancer of the breast, colon, lung, kidney and liver — increases with the amount of alcohol you drink and the length of time you have been drinking regularly.

4. Maintain a Healthy Weight, be Physically Active

Maintaining a healthy weight might lower the risk of various types of cancer, including cancer of the breast, prostate, lung, colon and kidney. Physical activity counts, too. In addition to helping you control your weight, physical activity on its own might lower the risk of breast cancer and colon cancer.

Adults who participate in any amount of physical activity gain some health benefits. For substantial health benefits strive to get at least 150 minutes a week of moderate aerobic activity or 75 minutes a week of vigorous aerobic physical activity. You can also do a combination of moderate and vigorous activity. As a general goal, include at least 30 minutes of physical activity in your daily routine — and if you can do more, even better.

5. Don't be Exposed to Excess Sunlight

Skin cancer is one of the most common kinds of cancer — and one of the most preventable. Try these tips: Avoid midday sun. Stay out of the sun between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., when the sun's rays are strongest.

Stay in the shade. When you're outdoors, stay in the shade as much as possible. Sunglasses and a broad-brimmed hat help, too.

Cover exposed areas. Wear tightly woven, loose fitting clothing that covers as much of your skin as possible. Opt for bright or dark colors, which reflect more ultraviolet radiation than pastels or bleached cotton. Don't skimp on sunscreen. Use generous amounts of sunscreen when you're outdoors, and reapply often. Avoid tanning beds and sunlamps; these are just as damaging as natural sunlight.

6. Get Immunized

Cancer prevention includes protection from certain viral infections. Talk to your doctor about immunization against:

Hepatitis B can increase the risk of developing liver cancer. The hepatitis B vaccine is recommended for certain high-risk adults — such as adults who are sexually active but not in a mutually monogamous relationship, people with sexually transmitted infections, intravenous drug users, men who have sex with men, and health care or public safety workers who might be exposed to infected blood or body fluids.

Human papillomavirus is a sexually transmitted virus that can lead to cervical and other genital cancers as well as squamous cell cancers of the head and neck. The HPV vaccine is recommended for girls and boys age 9 to 12; vaccine can be given up to the age of 26 but is less effective.

7. Avoid Risky Behaviors

Practice safe sex. Limit your number of sexual partners and use a condom when you have sex. The more sexual partners you have in your lifetime, the more likely you are to contract a sexually transmitted infection — such as HPV which causes the majority of cervical cancers and may also increase the risk of cancer of the throat, anus, penis, vulva and vagina.

8. Ensure Adequate Levels of Vitamin D

Low levels of Vitamin D, which can be determined in a blood sample, may be associated with an increased risk of colon, breast, prostate, and pancreatic cancer. In areas of minimal sun exposure, such as the North-Eastern US, the recommended daily allowance of Vitamin D under age 70 is 600 IU a day and over age 70 is 800 IU a day.

9. Check your House for Radon Levels

Radon is a radioactive gas released from rocks and soil. Radioactive particles from radon can lead to lung cancer. Testing the air is the only way to know if your home has elevated radon levels. Radon testing and corrective action when necessary is recommended.

10. Get Regular Medical Care

Regular self-exams and screenings for various types of cancers — such as cancer of the skin, colon, prostate, cervix, lung and breast — can increase your chances of discovering cancer early when treatment is most likely to be successful. Ask your doctor about the best cancer screening schedule for you.

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Strang Cancer Prevention Institute has developed and updates guidelines for cancer screening and best practices for cancer prevention. Strang is synonymous with cancer screening and prevention. Strang was the first medical facility to introduce the Pap test into clinical practice which has saved millions of women's lives worldwide. Strang was opened by first lady Eleanor Roosevelt in 1933.