

Make *Yours* Healthy Choices!

Cancer Prevention

www.cancer.gov

Scientists estimate that many cancer deaths in the US could be prevented through lifestyle changes. An estimated 50 to 75% of cancer deaths in the US are caused by human behaviors such as smoking, physical inactivity and poor dietary choices.

Cancer can be caused by a number of different factors and may develop over a number of years. Choosing the right health behaviors and preventing exposure to certain environmental risk factors can help prevent the development of cancer.



Although there is no certain way to avoid all cancers, reducing individual risk factors significantly decreases the likelihood of contracting many forms of this devastating disease. Prevention means avoiding the risk factors and increasing the protective factors which can be controlled so that the chance of developing cancer decreases.

Some studies suggest that eating a healthy diet, especially one rich in fruits and vegetables, can lower the risk of certain cancers. Other studies link a diet high in fat with certain cancers, especially **breast** and **prostate cancer**. People can lower their fat intake by eating less red meat and fewer high-fat dairy products. Limiting consumption of alcoholic beverages to one drink a day can also lower the risk of certain cancers.

health



Protecting the skin from the sun's rays could prevent about 80% of all **skin cancers**. Always wear sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or greater. Skin needs protection at all times, not just on sunny days. Be sure to purchase the newer broad-spectrum sunscreens which contain products to block both UVA and UVB rays. "*Slip, Slop, Slap*" for skin cancer prevention. The American Cancer Society recommends that anyone out in the sun *slip* on a shirt, *slop* on sunscreen and *slap* on a hat!

Practicing safe sex can also help protect people from certain cancers. Infection with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) greatly increases a person's risk for cancers of the **immune** and **lymphatic systems**. Infection with hepatitis B virus (HBV) is the predominant cause of **liver cancer** in the US. HBV is transmitted through unprotected sex with an infected person or through sharing infected needles or other sharp objects which break the skin.

Smoking damages nearly every organ in the human body, is linked to at least 10 different cancers and accounts for 30% of all cancer deaths.

Avoiding tobacco use is the single most important step Americans can take to reduce the cancer burden in this country.



Making wise lifestyle choices like eating a healthy diet, skin protection, avoiding tobacco and regular exercise, to name a few, can help you avoid some of the common risk factors associated with this potentially deadly disease.

Note: This information is meant to complement the advice of your health care providers, not to replace it. Talk to your doctor if you have any health care concerns.