

Journey to Wellness — A free self-guided healthy living program

Reduce your cancer risk



Although not all cancers are avoidable, healthy lifestyle choices, preventive vaccines and avoiding toxins can help **reduce the risk of developing some cancers**. Screenings and early detection can dramatically reduce the risk of dying from cancer.

Lifestyle choices

Consider these lifestyle tips to help prevent cancer.

Don't use tobacco.

For help quitting tobacco, ask a healthcare provider about stop-smoking products and other ways of quitting.

Eat a healthy diet.

Eat plenty of fruits and vegetables, drink alcohol in moderation, if at all, and limit processed meats.

Maintain a healthy weight and be physically active.

Find ways to move every day.

Protect yourself from the sun.

Avoid the midday sun, stay in the shade, cover your skin, don't skimp on sunscreen and don't use tanning beds or sunlamps.

Get vaccinated.

Protect against certain viral infections that can help protect against cancer.

Avoid risky behaviors.

Practice safe sex by limiting the number of sexual partners you have and using condoms. Don't share needles.

Get medical care.

Regular self-exams and screenings for cancers can increase the chances of finding cancer early.

Plant-based diet

Filling your plate with foods grown in the ground may be the best diet for cancer prevention. Try these gradual changes to eat a plant-based diet that is sustainable and realistic for you:

Start your day off right.

Enjoy breakfast with whole-grain oatmeal, buckwheat or quinoa, and fruit to give you the energy to tackle your day.

Experiment with meatless meals.

Try "Meatless Mondays" and make one new meatless recipe per week.

Treat meat like a condiment.

Instead of using meat as a main dish, use just a little for flavor.

Use legumes for bulk.

Decrease the amount of meat in some recipes by increasing the amount of beans, lentils or vegetables. These foods fill more space on your plate so that you won't feel deprived.

Fill your plate with fruits and vegetables first.

Cover about half of your plate with fruits and vegetables for lunch and dinner.

Information adapted from [mayoclinic.org](https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/cancer-prevention/dietary-changes/cancer-prevention-7-tips-to-reduce-your-risk): [Cancer prevention: 7 tips to reduce your risk](#) and [Plant power: Using diet to lower cancer risk](#).

[mayoclinichealthsystem.org](https://www.mayoclinichealthsystem.org)

©2025 Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research. All rights reserved. MAYO, MAYO CLINIC and the triple-shield Mayo logo are trademarks and service marks of MFMER.

MC4770-25rev0125