

# HealthyBy Choice

...One Day at a Time

Volume 15 Issue 2 • February 2020



## February is National Cancer Prevention Month

Research has shown that more than 40 percent of all cancers diagnosed and nearly half of all deaths from cancer in the United States can be attributed to preventable causes – things like **smoking, excess body weight, physical inactivity, and excessive exposure to the sun.**

**Tobacco use** is the leading preventable cause of cancer and deaths from cancer. It causes cancer because tobacco or secondhand smoke exposes individuals to many harmful chemicals that damage DNA, causing genetic and epigenetic alterations that lead to cancer development.

**Smoking is linked to 17 different types of cancers in addition to lung cancer.**

Researchers estimate that 15 percent of all cancer cases diagnosed in the United States are related to people being **overweight or obese, inactive, and/or eating a poor diet.** Therefore, maintaining a healthy weight, being physically active, and consuming a balanced diet are effective ways a person can lower his or her risk of developing or dying from cancer. Exactly how obesity increases a person's risk for cancer is not well understood, but accumulating evidence indicates a role for inflammatory immune cells in fat tissue.

**Being overweight or obese as an adult increases a person's risk for 15 types of cancer.**

Even modest **use of alcohol** may increase cancer risk, but the greatest risks are associated with excessive and/or long-term consumption. Thus, it is concerning that in the United States, there has been a dramatic rise in high-risk alcohol consumption, with nearly 37 million adults reporting binge drinking, once a week, in 2015.

**Alcohol consumption has been causally linked with 6 different types of cancers.**

**Exposure to ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun or indoor tanning** devices can cause genetic mutations and poses a serious threat for the development of all three main types of skin cancer—basal cell carcinoma, squamous cell carcinoma, and melanoma, which is the deadliest form of skin cancer. Thus, one of the most effective ways a person can reduce his or her risk of skin cancer is by practicing sun-safe habits and not using UV indoor tanning devices.

**Persistent infection with several pathogens** — bacteria, viruses, and parasites that cause disease — increases a person's risk for several types of cancer. The most recent estimate is that 15 percent of all new cancer cases diagnosed worldwide in 2012 were attributable to persistent infection with pathogens, the most common of which were *Helicobacter pylori*, human papillomavirus (HPV), hepatitis B virus (HBV), and hepatitis C virus (HCV) (95). Thus, individuals can significantly lower their risks for certain types of cancer by protecting themselves from infection with cancer-associated pathogens or by obtaining treatment, if available, to eliminate an infection.

- In the United States, 4 out of 10 cancer cases and almost half of all deaths from cancer are associated with preventable risk factors.
- Not using tobacco is one of the most effective ways to prevent cancer from developing.
- Nearly 20 percent of U.S. cancer diagnoses are related to excess body weight, alcohol intake, poor diet, and physical inactivity.
- Many cases of skin cancer could be prevented by protecting the skin from ultraviolet radiation from the sun and indoor tanning devices.
- Nearly all cases of cervical cancer could be prevented by HPV vaccination, but most U.S. adolescents have not received the recommended doses of the vaccine.



**Be Healthy!**

Eat well, Live well.

American Association for Cancer Research



Prevention is always preferable! Live Well!



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## AMERICAN HEART MONTH

### 10 Tips for a Healthy Heart

#### 1. Stop smoking

Quitting smoking is the best thing that can be done for the heart and for overall health. Smokers have a higher risk of developing many chronic disorders, including atherosclerosis, or the buildup of fatty substances in the arteries.

#### 2. Know your numbers

Maintaining a healthy weight, blood pressure and total cholesterol play a significant role in maintaining a healthy heart.

#### 3. Screen for diabetes

Untreated diabetes can lead to heart disease, among many other complications. Diabetes can be easily detected through a simple blood test and managed a variety of ways under the care of a physician.

#### 4. Get Active

Physical activity not only improves heart health but can also improve overall mental and physical health. The American Heart Association (AHA) recommends five 30 minute moderate exercise sessions each week. These sessions can be broken up into two or three 10 or 15-minute segments during the day.

#### 5. Build some muscle

Strength training compliments cardiovascular exercise by toning muscles and burning fat. Proper strength training can improve daily functional movements, decreasing the chance of injury. The AHA recommends getting in two days of moderate to high-intensity strength training each week.

#### 6. Eat Smart

A healthy diet full of heart-smart foods is essential to a healthy heart and lifestyle. Salmon, nuts, berries, and oats are just a few of the heart "superfoods" that may help reduce the risk of atherosclerosis.

#### 7. Limit junk

It's important to limit intake of nutrient-poor junk foods. Added sugars, saturated fat and excessive sodium can all negatively impact heart health and overall physical health. These foods can cause weight gain, raise blood pressure and clog arteries, which are all risk factors for heart disease.

#### 8. Stress Less

Stress increases cortisol, which leads to weight gain, a key risk factor for heart disease. In addition, stress can lead to other unhealthy habits, making it harder to stick to a heart-healthy program. Sleep more, eat healthy and practice positive self-talk.

#### 9. Sleep more

Sleeping restores the body, helps decrease stress and increases overall happiness. Clocking at least seven hours each night. Ample sunshine and physical activity also aid in improving sleep quality.

#### 10. Smile

A happy heart is a healthy heart. Making time for enjoyable activities and hobbies helps relieve stress and improves the overall mood, providing a great foundation for a heart-healthy lifestyle.



Love Your Heart!

