

3 Cancer Risk Reduction Strategies



It's Cancer Control Month, and it's time to shed some light on cancer prevention.

The National Cancer Institute has revealed that "Some risk factors can be controlled. Choosing the right health behaviors and preventing exposure to certain environmental risk factors can help prevent the development of cancer."

In other words, it's possible to take steps that can reduce your risk of cancer. Let's look at some specific strategies...

Cancer Risk Reduction Strategy #1: Maintain a Healthy Weight

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), "Research has shown that being overweight or obese substantially raises a person's risk of getting endometrial (uterine), breast, prostate, and colorectal cancers." The American Cancer Society backs up this assertion, adding "In the United States, overweight and obesity contribute to 14%-20% of all cancer deaths."

So what does this mean for you? Well, if you're overweight or obese, it's time to talk

with your doctor or another health professional about strategies for losing weight.

Start slowly and make changes that will be sustainable over time. Generally this means eating a healthful diet and getting regular exercise. Eating nutritious foods and staying active can further reduce your cancer risk.

Cancer Risk Reduction Strategy #2: Protect Your Skin

Did you know that skin cancer is the most common type of cancer in the United States? It's true — just ask the CDC.

Since sun exposure is the most common cause of skin cancer, the best thing you can do to reduce your risk is to be smart when you go outside. It's great to get some vitamin D, but make sure to avoid excess exposure by wearing sunscreen or sun-protective clothing. And skip the tanning bed!

Cancer Risk Reduction Strategy #3: Steer Clear of Tobacco

The National Cancer Institute maintains "Smoking causes about 30 percent of all U.S. deaths from cancer. Avoiding tobacco use is the single most important step Americans can take to reduce the cancer burden in this country."

The CDC has also revealed that "Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death, and cigarette smoking causes almost all cases." So really, it's time to steer clear of tobacco use, even secondhand smoke. Protect your health today!

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