
Colorectal Cancer: Reducing Your Risk

Weight

- Being overweight increases your risk of colorectal cancer.
- Maintain, or work towards, a healthy weight to reduce your risk.

Physical Activity

- Physical activity decreases colorectal cancer risk.
- The American Institute for Cancer Research recommends incorporating 30 minutes of moderate activity most days of the week.
 - Start by moving more and sitting less.

Alcohol

- Alcohol is not recommended.
- If you do choose to consume alcohol, stay within the recommended limits of 1 drink per day for women and 2 drinks per day for men.

Red Meat

- Diets containing large amounts of beef, pork, and lamb have been found to increase colorectal cancer risk.
 - Limit intake to 18 ounces of cooked red meat per week (that's six 3-ounce servings or less per week).

Processed Meats

- Eating even small amounts of processed meats increases colorectal cancer risk. Eat these very sparingly or avoid altogether.
- Processed meats include: sausage, bacon, lunch meat, and hot dogs.

Whole Grains

- A diet rich in whole grains lowers colorectal cancer risk.
- 90 grams, or about 3 servings of whole grains per day, has shown significant benefit.
- Whole grains include: oats, barley, quinoa, and brown rice.

Beans, Nuts, Seeds

- Diets rich in plant-based proteins reduce cancer risk. They provide vital cancer-fighting nutrients and fiber.
- Work to use more plant-based proteins in your diet instead of animal protein.

Fruits and Non-starchy Vegetables

- A diet rich in fruits and non-starchy vegetables decreases the risk of colorectal and other cancers.
- Aim to consume at least 5 servings per day, with a goal intake of 9 servings or more.
- 1 serving includes: 1 cup raw, 1/2 cup cooked, half of a large piece of fruit.

Garlic

- Garlic contains allium, a potent cancer-fighting nutrient.
- May help with DNA repair and decrease colorectal cancer cell growth.

Calcium and Vitamin D

- Research has shown an inverse relationship between calcium and Vitamin D and colorectal cancer risk.
- Men should aim for 1000 mg calcium per day (and no more than 1200 mg per day).
- Women should aim for 1000-1200 mg calcium per day.
- Sources of calcium include: milk, yogurt, cheese, dark green leafy vegetables, and certain fish (such as sardines and salmon), as well as fortified foods like orange juice and tofu.
- Vitamin D is mostly produced in the body with the help of sunshine. It is also found in fortified milk, mushrooms, and fatty fish.