



Reducing Your Cancer Risk

By Kristen Heim, Certified Yoga Practitioner

Fiery Sun Fitness

Did you know that when you are exercising, you are reducing your risk for many types of cancer? The American Cancer Society recommends exercising at least 30 minutes 5 days a week. Moderate exercise such as brisk walking 2 hours a week cuts risk of breast cancer by 18%. Sneak in some cardio by taking the stairs during your lunch hour or as you head out of the office, park further away from the grocery store. Participate in yoga and pilates classes and use only your muscles and get a full body workout by strengthening your core, back, arms and legs.

Control your weight. Being overweight or obese increases the risk of several cancers, including cancers of the breast (among women past menopause), colon, esophagus and kidney. Check your Body Mass Index (BMI), a score based on the relationship between your height and weight. To reduce your cancer risk, try to keep your BMI less than 25. A BMI in an adult between 25 and 29.9 is considered overweight and a BMI of 30 or higher is considered obese. If you are trying to control your BMI, a good first step is to watch portion sizes, especially of foods high in calories, fat and added sugars. Write down what and how much you eat and drink for a week and see where you can cut down on portion sizes. Drinking at least 8 eight-ounce servings of water a day may also reduce the risk of bladder and colon cancer.

Take your exercise outdoors. Don't forget to put on that sunscreen before heading out! Over 1 million people are diagnosed each year with skin cancer. Skin cancer is one of the most preventable types of cancer. Use sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30, the potency of sunscreen decreases after just a couple of hours in the sun, and 10 minutes of daily exposure to aging UVA rays is known to cause changes which lead to wrinkles and brown spots within a few months. When using an SPF 30 sunscreen and applying it thickly, you get the equivalent of 1 minute of UVB rays for each 30 minutes you spend in the sun.

Continue each day with a change in your daily habits and think of the difference you're making in your body's future!