



## Reducing cancer risk through what we eat.

It's not as hard as you may think.

For many of us, summertime means outdoor eating and barbecuing with friends. Unfortunately, many of our favorite summertime foods are not good for us – our waistlines, hearts, or cancer risk.

Here's the good news: we can actually lower our cancer risk by what we put in our mouths. It's not as difficult as you may think to make our summertime and year-round eating a lot healthier.

**“Researchers estimate that in the U.S., we can prevent about 38 percent of breast cancers with some basic healthy steps.”**

-Karen Collins, nutrition advisor for the American Institute for Cancer Research

### LIMIT MEAT ON THE GRILL

The connection between red meat and cancer risk has been well established, particularly the risk for colorectal cancer. However, the way you prepare meat has a big impact on how it contributes to cancer risk.

Cooking meats on a BBQ grill at very high temperatures creates chemicals (heterocyclic amines, or HAs) that might increase cancer risk. A 2009 study followed 62,000 people over 9 years and found that those with the highest intake of very well done meat had a 70% higher risk for pancreatic cancer over those with lowest consumption and those who preferred very well-done steak were almost 60% more likely to get pancreatic cancer as those who ate steak less well-done or did not eat steak.

**The American Institute for Cancer Research recommends no more than 18 oz. per week of red meats (beef, pork, lamb) to reduce cancer risk. Processed meats should be consumed sparingly as they are linked to colorectal and stomach cancers.**

#### Smart solutions:

- Choose lean cuts of meat and trim excess fat
- If you grill, line grill with foil and poke small holes in it so the fat can drip off without generating smoke
- Avoid charring meat or eating parts that are especially burned and black
- Braise, steam, poach, or stew meat instead of hot grilling
- Choose chicken, turkey, or fish instead of red meat
- Eat smaller portions of meat less often

## CHOOSE PLANTS

Many cancer prevention studies, including the American Cancer Institute for Cancer Research (ACRI) and the World Cancer Research Fund's (WCRF) comprehensive global report, point to a plant-based diet to lower the risk of many cancers.

Why plants? The body seems to use certain nutrients (vitamin C, vitamin E, carotenoids, folate) in vegetables and fruits to protect against damage that happens as a result of normal metabolism. Because this damage is linked with increased cancer risk, these nutrients are thought to protect against cancer. Studies suggest that people who eat more vegetables and fruits, may have a lower risk for some types of cancer.

Additionally, vegetables and fruits are low in calories and these foods help people get to and maintain a healthy weight. According to the ACRI/WCRF report, carrying excess body fat increases the risk of seven cancers (esophagus, pancreas, colon and rectum, endometrium, kidney, postmenopausal breast, and gallbladder).

A study published in the American Journal of Epidemiology also found that the likelihood of developing estrogen-receptor negative breast cancer was 20 percent less when women followed a vegetable rich diet with little meat. For breast cancer in particular, the consumption of walnuts slowed cancer cell growth in mice, and antioxidants found in peaches and plums were shown to kill breast cancer cells.

### Smart solutions:

- Eat more of a variety of vegetables, fruits, whole grains and legumes such as bean
- Choose foods high in carotenoids (look for red, orange, yellow and dark green)
- Aim to add cancer-fighting super foods to your diet (see sidebar)

## LOSE THE BOOZE

Even a moderate amount of alcohol is "clearly linked" to an increased risk of

mouth, throat, voice box, esophagus, liver, breast, and probably colon and rectum cancer, as well. Regular intake of even a few drinks per week is linked to a higher risk of breast cancer in women, especially in women who do not get enough folate.

### Smart solutions:

- Set healthy limits. No more than 2 drinks per day for men and 1 drink per day for women. (A drink is 12 oz of beer, 5 oz of wine, or 1.5 oz of spirits.)
- Put the focus on fun, alcohol-free drinks at your events, even when offering alcohol

## CONTROL FAT INTAKE AND PORTION SIZE

There is evidence that saturated fats may increase cancer risk. High-fat diets tend to lead to weight gain and obesity is linked with an increased risk of several types of cancer. A 2012 study published in the Journal of the National Cancer Institute linked high-fat dairy foods with a higher risk of dying from breast cancer.

### Smart solutions:

- Limit fatty meats, high-fat dairy and processed foods
- Be as lean as possible without becoming underweight
- Incorporate physical activity into daily life

Moderation should always be our guide when it comes to our diets. Focus on healthy, unprocessed foods with an emphasis on fruits, vegetables, whole grains and fiber.

### Article sources

American Cancer Institute for Cancer Research website, Recommendations for Cancer Prevention, Foods that Fight Cancer, Food, Nutrition, Physical Activity, and the Prevention of Cancer: a Global Perspective, and Cancer Research Update, March 6, 2013, <http://www.aicr.org/>

Cancer.org website, American Cancer Society Guidelines on Nutrition and Physical Activity for Cancer Prevention and "Healthier grilling, avoiding the dangers of charred meat," April 22, 2009, <http://www.cancer.org/>

US News & world Report website, "Diet Changes That Might Cut Breast Cancer Risk," May 15, 2013, <http://health.usnews.com/>



## Super cancer-fighting foods

These food are rich in cancer-fighting nutrients and low in calories. (Find out more at <http://www.aicr.org/foods-that-fight-cancer/>)

Apples  
Apricot  
Blueberries  
Broccoli & Cruciferous Vegetables  
Carrots  
Cherries  
Coffee  
Cranberries  
Flaxseed  
Grapefruit  
Legumes (Dry Beans, Peas & Lentils)  
Mangos  
Soy  
Squash (Winter)  
Berries  
Dark Green Leafy Vegetables  
Garlic  
Grapes and Grape Juice  
Grapefruit  
Green Tea  
Tomatoes  
Whole Grains  
Acai Berries  
Blackberries & Raspberries  
Carrots  
Chili Peppers  
Citrus Fruits (oranges/lemons)  
Kale and Other Greens  
Mushrooms  
Nuts  
Onions  
Papayas  
Pomegranates  
Red Peppers  
Spinach  
Strawberries  
Sweet Potatoes  
Walnuts  
Watermelon & Other Melons



## Sierra Nevada Cancer Center Locations

**Carson City**  
1460 S Curry Street, Suite 100  
Carson City, Nevada 89703

**Fallon**  
1020 New River Parkway  
Fallon, Nevada 89406

**Gardnerville**  
1107 Hwy 395  
Gardnerville, Nevada 89410

**Sparks**  
2345 E. Prater Way, Suite 102  
Sparks, Nevada 89434

Now booking patients for July:

**South Lake Tahoe**  
1154 Emerald Bay Road  
South Lake Tahoe, CA 96150

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