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#### The role of exercise in cancer prevention

The effects of cancer on the body are profound, which is why so many people want to implement as many measures as they can to reduce their risk of developing the disease. One of the vital steps to take is to increase physical activity.

A recent study from researchers at the American Cancer Society and the National Cancer Institute links exercise to a lower risk of specific types of cancer. People understand that exercise is important to health, but they may not know just how integral physical activity can be to cancer prevention and even recovery.

Physical activity includes walking, dancing, running, biking, swimming, engaging in sports activities, and performing household chores. The National Cancer Institute says higher levels of physical activity lower cancer risk in these types of cancer.

- · Bladder cancer
- · Breast cancer
- · Colon cancer
- Endometrial cancer
- · Esophageal cancer
- · Kidney cancer

• Gastric (stomach) cancer

There also is some evidence that suggests physical activity is associated with a reduced risk of lung cancer.

Exercise affects various biological factors, which is why it may help prevent cancer. For example, exercise can prevent high blood levels of insulin. which have been linked to breast and colon cancer progression. Furthermore, exercise can lower sex hormones like estrogen, which has been associated with cancer development and progression. Since overweight and obesity are major risk factors for cancer development, exercising can reduce overall weight and belly fat, which improves the odds of cancer avoidance. Chronic inflammation is associated with the development of cancer, and exercise helps lower this harmful type of inflammation, too, says Partner MD. In addition, physical activity helps boost the immune system, which may help prevent cancer or assist in recovery.

The ACS says adults should get at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity or 75 minutes

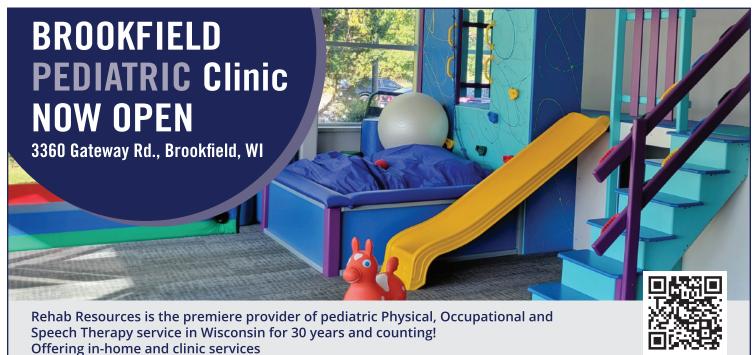


of vigorous-intensity physical activity each week, preferably spread throughout the week. For those who haven't exercised in a while, it is best to start exercising slowly and build up gradually. Examples of moderate-intensity exercise include brisk walking, dancing, softball, and doubles tennis. Vigorous activities include swimming, aerobic dance, running, or jogging.

Exercise also is great for cancer survivors, as it can improve sleep quality and energy levels. It also helps the body repair itself, and may improve bone strength.

In addition to healthy eating, exercise is one of the key steps people can take to reduce cancer risk.





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#### How to reduce risk for Lyme disease

When the weather warms up and hours of daylight increase, few people can resist the allure of the great outdoors. Nature beckons each spring, and those answering that call must do so safely.

Lyme disease is a potential threat for people who live in certain regions. The Centers Disease Control Prevention reports that Lyme disease cases have been reported in nearly every state, though residents in certain states are more vulnerable than others. For example, CDC data indicates that incidence rates were highest in several states in New England, including Maine, New Hampshire and Rhode Island, while rates in Oklahoma, Missouri and Wyoming were especially low.

Lyme disease is spread by the bite of an infected tick. Playing, hiking, camping, or working in wooded or grassy places where instances of Lyme disease are high increases a person's risk of being bitten. But that doesn't mean those in areas like New England, the mid-Atlantic or the upper-midwest must avoid



such activities. However, they should take steps to prevent tick bites when going out into the great outdoors.

• Recognize where ticks live. The CDC reports that blacklegged ticks cause Lyme disease and that such ticks live in moist and humid environments. In addition, the Lyme Disease Association notes that ticks are most likely to be in certain areas, including woods, areas where woods meet lawns and where lawns meet fields.

Ticks also may be living in tall brush/grass, under leaves, under ground cover, near stone walls or wood piles, or in shady areas. Ticks also may be drawn to areas around bird feeders or outdoor areas designated for pets.

• Wear insect repellent. The CDC recommends wearing insect repellents registered with the Environmental Protection Agency. Repellents should contain DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon euca-

lyptus, para-menthane-diol, or 2-undecanone. The EPA even has a tool on its website that can help people choose the right repellent products for them. That tool can be found at https://www.epa.gov/insectrepellents/find-repellent-rightyou. The CDC advises people to treat clothing and gear, including socks and tents, with products containing 0.5 percent permethrin, which can remain protective even after several washings. Pre-treated clothing may be protective even longer.

• Check for ticks every day. Ticks can be found anywhere on the body, and the CDC recommends checking for ticks every day. Pay particular attention to underarms, in and around the ears, inside the belly button, the back of the knees, in and around all head and body hair, between the legs, and around the waist.

Ticks pose a threat when spending time in the great out-doors. Various preventive measures can help people reduce their risk for Lyme disease.





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#### Long-term solutions to protect joints

Periodic aches and pains can affect anyone. Individuals who are physically active and even those who live largely sedentary lifestyles may experience pain from time to time. In fact, many professional and amateur athletes experience relatively minor, short-term injuries at one point or another, and rest is often the best remedy to overcome such obstacles.

Though minor tweaks may be somewhat normal, longterm issues like persistent joint pain should not be written off as par for the course. It can be tempting to write joint pain off as a concern only serious athletes need to worry about. Terms like "tennis elbow" and "runner's knee" can give less physically active individuals a false impression of joint pain and what causes it. But the Mayo Clinic notes that lack of exercise can contribute to pain and stiffness in the joints. That's because exercise strengthens the muscles and tissues that surround the joints. That added strength puts less stress on the joints.

In recognition of the threat



posed by chronic joint pain, the Arthritis Foundation\* recommends individuals take various steps to protect their joints over the long haul.

· Focus less on fashion in regard to footwear. High heels may be the epitome of glamorous footwear, but women who routinely wear high heels will pay a steep price. The AF notes that heels put added stress on the knees and increase risk for osteoporosis, and experts indicate that three-inch heels are seven times more stressful on feet than one-inch heels. But women aren't the only ones whose footwear fashion sense could be hurting their joints. Men also must pay attention to what they're putting on their

feet. For example, sandals without a back strap force toes to overgrip the edge of the sandal, putting needless strain on each foot and potentially causing issues with the toes.

- Alternate between sitting and standing throughout the day. Joint stiffness and strain can develop when individuals spend lengthy periods of time sitting or standing. The AF recommends taking a break to stand up or sit down every 30 minutes. Professionals who sit at a desk all day may want to switch to height-adjustable desks that make it easy for them to transition from sitting to standing and still get their work done.
- Maintain a healthy weight. Being overweight

causes a ripple effect that impacts the entire body, including the joints. The AF notes that researchers have determined that losing 11 pounds can reduce risk for osteoarthritis of the knee by 50 percent. On the flip side, each extra pound an individual carries puts four times the stress on his or her knees. Exercising to lose weight can provide the added benefit of preventing joint stiffness.

• Opt for low-impact activities. Low-impact activities like cycling and swimming are easier on the joints than fitness classes that involve high-intensity dancing and kickboxing. In addition, when choosing between a treadmill and elliptical machine, the Mayo Clinic notes that ellipticals are generally considered low-impact machines that are less stressful on the knees, hips and back than running on a treadmill or even outdoors.

Various strategies can help individuals maintain healthy, pain-free joints over the long haul.





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### Kids can set the pace for longterm health

Long-term health is not something that many young people routinely consider. After all, it's easy to feel invincible during one's childhood and adolescence. But the steps that young people take early on can affect their health as they get older.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, establishing healthy behaviors during childhood and adolescence is more beneficial to long-term health than trying to change poor behaviors in adulthood.

#### **Prioritize healthy foods**

According to the childhood recreation group Mountain Kids, habits and actions performed subconsciously are hard to break because repeat habits trigger dopamine in the brain, causing pleasurable feelings that reinforce the behavior. So grabbing a slice of cake after school for a snack becomes rote. Instead, stocking the refrigerator and pantry

with sliced fruits and vegetables, low-fat yogurt, lean protein like hummus and whole wheat dipping crackers can set the course for more responsible eating behaviors.

#### Increase physical activity

The CDC says 21 percent of adolescents aged 12 to 19 are obese, and two in five students have a chronic health condition. A sedentary lifestyle may be one contributor to these statistics. At home and in school, adults can encourage physical activity as an effective means to prevent obesity. The Department of Health and Human Service recommends that children and adolescents age six and older get at least one hour a day of moderate or vigorous aerobic activity, such as running or biking. Muscleand bone-strengthening activities also are recommended. Kids who learn early on to appreciate physical activity reap long-term benefits that extend well into adulthood.



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#### Simple ways to make meals healthier

Cooking foods at home is one of the simplest ways to gain greater control over personal health. Cooking at home is the easiest way to know precisely what you're putting into your body each day. Cooking your own meals also enables you to customize recipes so they align with any dietary restrictions or personal preferences you may have.

According to a 2021 survey by the consumer market research firm Hunter, 71 percent of people in the United States plan to continue cooking more at home after the pandemic ends. Increased creativity and confidence in the kitchen, as well as the fact that cooking at home helps to save money and enables one to heat healthier, is driving the ongoing increase in dining in.

When cooking at home, cooks can consider various tips to make meals that much healthier.

• Increase fiber intake. Fiber improves bowel regularity and helps a person feel full between meals. High fiber foods also help stabilize blood sugar levels. Two servings of



fibrous foods at each meal and an additional fiber-rich snack each day can ensure your body is getting the fiber it needs.

- Slow down eating. The pace at which a person eats a meal can affect his or her overall health. Healthline reports that fast eaters are more likely to eat more and have higher body mass indexes than slow eaters.
- Choose whole grains. Choosing whole grain breads

or cereals over refined grains can make for a more nutritious diet. Whole grains are linked to a reduced risk for type 2 diabetes, heart disease and cancer.

• Swap Greek yogurt for other varieties. Greek yogurt contains up to twice as much protein as regular yogurt, providing roughly 10 grams per 3.5 ounces. Protein along with fiber helps a person feel fuller longer, which can manage appetite and reduce overeating.

Greek yogurt also can replace mayonnaise or sour cream in certain recipes.

- Add a vegetable to every meal. Vegetables are loaded with essential vitamins and minerals. Plus, they tend to be high in antioxidants that strengthen the immune system. Increase vegetable intake by eating vegetables with every meal
- Choose healthy fats. While a person should minimize the amount of oils and other fats used during the cooking process, when it's necessary for a recipe, select the best fat possible. Olive oil is a monounsaturated fat that is packed with antioxidant polyphenols. It is considered a heart-healthy oil, and it may promote a healthy brain and memory function.
- Cut out sweetened beverages. Sodas and other sweetened drinks are leading sources of added sugar in diets. Opting for water or naturally sweetened fruit juices can improve overall health.



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#### Outdoor activities benefit kids

and Modern amenities indoor comforts have made life easier in many ways, but they've also helped to fashion a generation of people who spend much of their time inside. A 2018 report from the international research firm YouGov found that around 90 percent of study respondents from North America and Europe spend close to 22 hours inside every day. Children may get a little more time outdoors than adults, particularly if they participate in outdoor sports.

There are distinct advantages to engaging in more outdoor activities. Here's a look at some of them.

 Improved mood and reduced risk of depression: The YouGov report notes that around 15 percent of the world's population is affected by different levels of seasonal affective disorder, which is believed to be a direct result of lack of daylight. Symptoms go away when days are longer and individuals can enjoy more sunshine. Children who go outside and get ample exposure to sunlight may experience a



positive renewed energy.

- · Lower risk of obesity: Dr. Kenneth Ginsburg from the American Academy Pediatrics says outdoor play can help reduce obesity in today's youth. Children can enjoy self-directed physical activity that also stimulates awareness of one's surround-
- Improved vitamin D levels: Vitamin D has been dubbed the "sunshine vitamin" because sunlight hitting the skin prompts the liver and kidneys to create vitamin D in the body. A deficiency in vitamin D

can lead to depression and heart failure and may compromise the immune system. Children can improve current and future health by maintaining adequate vitamin D levels through healthy exposure to sunlight.

· Lower stress levels: Students of all ages are faced with stressful situations that come at them from every angle. The arrival of the global pandemic has been an added stressor that continues to affect children and adults. According to research by the University of Essex, outdoor exercise offers mental health benefits that

exceed those gleaned from indoor exercise. Spending time in a green space can result in improved mood and selfesteem. A 2017 study of Japanese students found those who spent time in the forest for two nights returned home with lower levels of cortisol, a hormone used as a marker of stress, than students who remained in the city. The practice of de-stressing outdoors is often referred to as "forest bathing" or "nature therapy."

• Better focus: A dose of

nature may help children diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder improve their concentration levels. A 2008 study from researchers at the University of Illinois found that children with ADHD demonstrated greater attention performance following a 20minute walk in a park as compared to a residential neighborhood or downtown area.

Getting outside and engaging in any activity has a variety of benefits for children and





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#### Did you know?



small study researchers at University College London found that black tea drinkers had significantly lower levels of the stress hormone cortisol than non-tea drinkers within 50 minutes of experiencing a stress-inducing event. The study also found that black tea drinkers expressed themselves in a more relaxed way than non-tea drinkers within 50 minutes of a stressful experience.

#### Are you "blind" to having vision loss?

By Cheryl L. Dejewski

"Often when I tell a patient that they have a serious eye condition like glaucoma or macular degeneration, they'll respond with 'But, I can see fine' or 'I haven't noticed anything wrong with my eyes," says Brett Rhode, MD, senior partner at Eye Care Specialists, an ophthalmology practice that has overseen the care of 200,000+ area residents. He adds. "Unfortunately, whether the person is in denial, didn't notice, or actually has no symptoms, the outcome is still the same. Early diagnosis and treatment are the only ways to prevent unnecessary vision loss.'

Cataract surgeon and partner at Eye Care Specialists Daniel Ferguson, MD, explains, "Most people don't realize that vision problems in one eye can be masked by the other eve's compensation ability. Or, changes are so gradual that they go unnoticed. For example, with glaucoma, loss of peripheral (side) vision slowly creeps in until it creates a "tunnel" effect. And, with cataracts, people don't realize how much they've been missing until the cloudy lens is surgically removed and replaced with an implant. Then









Cataracts

Diabetic Retinopathy

Glaucoma

Macular Degeneration

exclaim thev how much brighter, more colorful, and crisper everything is."

Loss of vision can also lead to serious issues, like an increased risk of falling, hip fractures, car accidents, nursing home placement, and depression. "Early diagnosis and prompt treatment are key to maintaining independence and quality of life. For example, when a patient's vision has diminished with age and a new eyeglass prescription doesn't help, we often find that cataracts are the cause of the problem and, in most cases, surgical removal and replacement with a lens implant is a relatively easy and painless solution," notes Daniel Paskowitz, MD, PhD, who utilizes both standard and advanced capability lenses.

"Poor vision is not a fact of life and aging. It's important to discover what's behind the **changes**—whether it's simply the need for a new glasses prescription or something more serious like the need for injection treatment to hold off diabetes-related damage. That's why scheduling comprehensive dilated eve exams at least every two years is so important," says optometrist David Scheidt, OD.

Continuing education lecturer Michael Raciti, MD, advises, "When you do schedule an appointment, make sure that it is for a 'comprehensive' exam, which means that the doctor dilates your pupils to check your accommodation ability (switching focus between near and far), pupil reflexes (adjusting from light to dark), muscle motility (looking to the sides and keeping the eyes in alignment), visual acuity (seeing objects clearly near and far), and visual field (seeing objects off to the side). They should also check the external surface (for infections and inflammations), lens (for cataracts), retina (for macular degeneration, diabetes, etc.), and internal pressure and

optic nerve (for glaucoma)."

Call the offices below if you are interested in scheduling an appointment for a second opinion or a comprehensive exam, which is typically covered by Medicare and/or insurance.

#### WARNING SIGNS

Don't deny or delay if you notice:

- Foggy, double or blurred vision
- Sensitivity to light and glare
- "Starbursts" around lights
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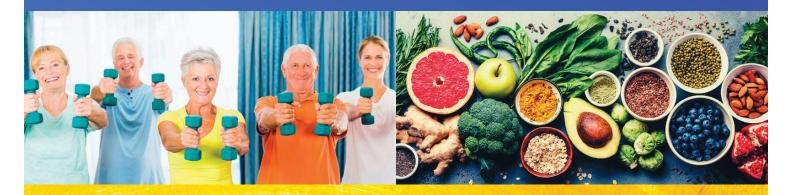
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